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THE CLASSICS OF MYSTERY

Volume Seven

THE MYSTERIES OF UDOLPHO

Edited by Michael Eenhoorn

WITHDRAWN

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In the last years of the Eighteenth Century there appeared England the works of a new novelist which immediately ptured the imagination of a large audience. First, in 1789, me *The Castles of Athin and Dunbayne.* Then, a year later, *Sicilian Romance* and the subsequent year, *The Romance of e Forest.* Finally, in 1794, came a book of enormous popurity in England and indeed throughout the world—*The ysteries of Udolpho.*

The author was Ann Radcliffe, just thirty years old the ear *Udolpho* was published. Born Ann Ward to a London adesman, she married William Radcliffe who eventually ve up a legal career to become publisher of the *English hronicle.* Although her subject matter was different from that so many of her contemporaries—Fielding, Sterne, Smolett nd others—Ann Radcliffe shared a single great talent with e writers of her age: she could tell a story. And it is the story *Udolpho,* with its great sense of romance and mystery, hich has kept the book alive through the years and has made appealing to readers of different ages and different ideas of yle and literary value.

Udolpho remains Ann Radcliffe's major work, even though was followed by the *Italian,* or the *Confessional of the Black enitents* and finally by the posthumously published *Gaston Blondeville.* In the last twelve years of her life Ann Radcliffe ffered from asthma; she died somewhat suddenly in 1823 nd is buried at the Chapel-of-ease in the Bayswater Road in ondon.

Juniper Press is proud to present this abridged edition of nn Radcliffe's mystery classic.

CHAPTER I

n the pleasant banks of the Garonne, in the province of ıscony, stood, in the year 1584, the château of Monsieur Aubert. From its windows were seen the pastoral landscapes Guienne and Gascony stretching along the river, gay with xuriant woods and vine, and plantations of olives. To the ıth, the view was bounded by the majestic Pyrenees, whose ınmits veiled in clouds, or exhibiting awful forms, seen, and t again, as the partial vapours rolled along, were sometimes rren, and gleamed through the blue tinge of air, and some-ıes frowned with forests of gloomy pine, that swept down-ırd to their base.

M. St. Aubert loved to wander, with his wife and daughter, the margin of the Garonne, and to listen to the music that ɔated on its waves. He had known life in other forms than ɔse of pastoral simplicity, having mingled in the gay and in e busy scenes of the world; but the flattering portrait of ankind which his heart had delineated in early youth, his perience had too sorrowfully corrected. Yet, amidst the anging visions of life, his principles remained unshaken, his nevolence unchilled; and he retired from the multitude, more *pity* than in anger, to scenes of simple nature, to the delights literature, and to the exercise of domestic virtues.

He was a descendant from the younger branch of an illus-ous family, and it was designed that the deficiency of his trimonial wealth should be supplied either by a splendid iance in marriage, or by success in the intrigues of public fairs. But St. Aubert had too nice a sense of honour to fulfil e latter hope, and too small a portion of ambition to sacrifice ıat he called happiness to the attainment of wealth. After e death of his father he married a very amiable woman, his ual in birth, and not his superior in fortune. The late Mon-

sieur St. Aubert's liberality, or extravagance, had so much involved his affairs, that his son found it necessary to dispose of a part of the family domain; and some years after his marriage he sold it to Monsieur Quesnel, the brother of his wife, and retired to a small estate in Gascony.

The building, as it then stood, was merely a summer cottage rendered interesting to a stranger by its neat simplicity, or the beauty of the surrounding scene; and considerable additions were necessary to make it a comfortable family residence. St. Aubert felt a kind of affection for every part of the fabric which he remembered in his youth, and would not suffer a stone of it to be removed; so that the new building, adapted to the style of the old one, formed with it only a simple and elegant residence. The taste of Madame St. Aubert was conspicuous in its internal finishing, where the same chaste simplicity was observable in the furniture, and in the few ornaments of the apartments that characterized the manners of its inhabitants.

The library occupied the west side of the château, and was enriched by a collection of the best books in the ancient and modern languages. This room opened upon a grove which stood on the brow of a gentle declivity, that fell towards the river, and the tall trees gave it a melancholy and pleasing shade, while from the windows the eye caught, beneath the spreading branches, the gay and luxuriant landscape stretching to the west, and overlooked on the left by the bold precipices of the Pyrenees. Adjoining the library was a greenhouse stored with scarce and beautiful plants; for one of the amusements of St. Aubert was the study of botany: and among the neighbouring mountains, which afforded a luxurious feast to the mind of the naturalist, he often passed the day in the pursuit of his favourite science.

Adjoining the eastern side of the greenhouse, looking towards the plains of Languedoc, was a room which Emily called her, and which contained her books, her drawings, her musical instruments, with some favourite birds and plants. Here she usually exercised herself in elegant arts, cultivated only because they were congenial to her taste, and in which native genius

isted by the instructions of Monsieur and Madame St. Aubert, ade her an early proficient. The windows of this room were rticularly pleasant; they descended to the floor, and, opening on the little lawn that surrounded the house, the eye was l between groves of almond, palm-trees, flowering-ash, d myrtle, to the distant landscape, where the Garonne ndered.

The peasants of this gay climate were often seen on an even- g, when the days labour was done, dancing in groups on e margin of the river. Their sprightly melodies, *débonnaire* ps, the fanciful figure of their dances, with the tasteful and pricious manner in which the girls adjusted their simple ess, gave a character to the scene entirely French.

The front of the château, which, having a southern aspect, ened upon the grandeur of the mountains, was occupied on e ground-floor by a rustic hall and two excellent sitting- oms. The first floor, for the cottage had no second story, was d out in bed-chambers, except one apartment that opened a balcony, and which was generally used for a breakfast- om.

On a lofty terrace, formed by the swelling bank of the river, se a plantation of orange, lemon, and palm trees, whose fruit the coolness of evening breathed delicious fragrance. With ese were mingled a few trees of other species. Here, under the mple shade of a plane-tree, that spread its majestic canopy wards the river, St. Aubert loved to sit in the fine evenings summer, with his wife and children, watching beneath its liage the setting sun, the mild splendour of its light fading om the distant landscape, till the shadows of twilight melted various features into one tint of sober grey.

The first interruptions to the happiness he had known since s retirement, were occasioned by the death of his two sons. he daughter was now his only surviving child; and while he atched the unfolding of her infant character with anxious ndness, he endeavoured with unremitting effort to counter- t those traits in her disposition which might hereafter lead r from happiness. She had discovered in her early years

uncommon delicacy of mind, warm affections, and read benevolence; but with these was observable a degree of suscep tibility too exquisite to admit of lasting peace. As she advance in youth, this sensibility gave a pensive tone to her spirit and a softness to her manner, which added grace to beauty and rendered her a very interesting object to persons of congenial disposition.

In person, Emily resembled her mother; having the sam elegant symmetry of form, the same delicacy of features, an the same blue eyes full of tender sweetness.

St. Aubert cultivated her understanding with the mos scrupulous care. He gave her a general view of the science and an exact acquaintance with every part of elegant literatur He taught her Latin and English, chiefly that she might unde stand the sublimity of their best poets.

Her favourite walk was to a little fishing-house belongin to St. Aubert, in a woody glen, on the margin of a rivulet tha descended from the Pyrenees, and, after foaming among thei rocks, wound its silent way beneath the shades it reflecte

This, too, was the favourite retreat of St. Aubert, to whic he frequently withdrew from the fervour of noon, with h wife, his daughter, and his books; or came at the sweet evenin hour to listen for the music of the nightingale.

It was in one of these excursions to this spot that she observe the following lines written with a pencil on a part of th wainscot:

> Go, pencil! faithful to thy master's sighs!
> Go—tell the Goddess of the fairy scene,
> When next her light steps wind these wood-walks green,
> Whence all his tears his tender sorrows rise.

These lines were not inscribed to any person; Emily ther fore could not apply them to herself, though she was undoub edly the nymph of these shades.

Soon after this period her anxiety was awakened by th indisposition of her father, who was attacked with a feve which, though not thought to be of a dangerous kind, ga

severe shock to his constitution. Madame St. Aubert and mily attended him with unremitting care; but his recovery as very slow, and, as he advanced towards health, Madame emed to decline.

To relieve, or perhaps to indulge, the pensive temper of his ind, he bade Emily fetch the lute she knew how to touch ith such sweet pathos. As she drew near the fishing-house, e was surprised to hear the tones of the instrument, which ere awakened by the hand of taste, and uttered a plaintive r, whose exquisite melody engaged all her attention. She stened in profound silence, afraid to move from the spot, lest e sound of her steps should occasion her to lose a note of the usic, or should disturb the musician. Everything without the uilding was still, and no person appeared. She continued to sten, till timidity succeeded to surprise and delight; a timidity creased by a remembrance of the pencilled lines she had rmerly seen, and she hesitated whether to proceed or to turn.

While she paused, the music ceased; and after a momentary esitation she re-collected courage to advance to the fishing-ouse, which she entered with faltering steps, and found noccupied ! She felt alarmed, she knew not wherefore; the elancholy gloom of evening, and the profound stillness of e place, interrupted only by the light trembling of leaves, eightened her fanciful apprehensions, and she was desirous quitting the building, but perceived herself grow faint, and t down. As she tried to recover herself, the pencilled lines the wainscot met her eye; she started as if she had seen stranger; but endeavouring to conquer the tremor of her pirits, rose and went to the window. To the lines before noticed e now perceived that others were added, in which her name ppeared.

Though no longer suffered to doubt that they were addressed herself, she was as ignorant as before by whom they could be ritten. While she mused, she thought she heard the sound a step without the building; and again alarmed, she caught her lute and hurried away. Monsieur and Madame St. Aubert

she found in a little path that wound along the sides of the glen.

Music and conversation detained them in this enchanting spot till the sun's last light slept upon the plains; till the white sails that glided beneath the mountains, where the Garonne wandered, became dim, and the gloom of evening stole over the landscape. It was a melancholy but not unpleasing gloom. St. Aubert and his family rose, and left the place with regret: alas ! Madame St. Aubert knew not that she left it for ever.

When they reached the fishing-house she missed her bracelet, and recollected that she had taken it from her arm after dinner, and had left it on the table when she went to walk. After a long search, in which Emily was very active, she was compelled to resign herself to the loss of it. What made this bracelet valuable to her, was a miniature of her daughter to which it was attached, esteemed a striking resemblance, and which had been painted only a few months before. When Emily was convinced that the bracelet was really gone, she blushed, and became thoughtful. That some stranger had been in the fishing-house during her absence, her lute and the additional lines of a pencil already informed her. From the purport of these lines it was not unreasonable to believe that the poet, the musician, and the thief were the same person. But though the music she had heard, the written lines she had seen, and the disappearance of the picture, formed a combination of circumstances very remarkable, she was irresistibly restrained from mentioning them; secretly determining, however, never again to visit the fishing-house without Monsieur or Madame St. Aubert.

As they drew near the house they observed an unusual bustle about it; the sound of voices was distinctly heard; servants and horses were seen passing between the trees; and at length the wheels of a carriage rolled along. Having come within view of the front of the château, a landau with smoking horses appeared on the little lawn before it. St. Aubert perceived the liveries of his brother-in-law, and in the parlour he found Monsieur and Madame Quesnel already entered. They had left Paris some days before, and were on the way to their estate,

nly ten leagues distant from La Vallée, and which Monsieur Quesnel had purchased several years before of St. Aubert. This entleman was the only brother of Madame St. Aubert; but he ties of relationship having never been strengthened by ongeniality of character, the intercourse between them had ot been frequent. M. Quesnel had lived altogether in the vorld: his aim had been consequence; splendour was the object f his taste; and his address and knowledge of character had arried him forward to the attainment of almost all that he ad courted. By a man of such a disposition, it is not surprising hat the virtues of St. Aubert should be overlooked; or that his ure taste, simplicity, and moderated wishes were considered s marks of a weak intellect and of confined views. His lady vas an Italian, and an heiress, by birth; and, by nature and ducation, was a vain and frivolous woman.

They now determined to pass the night with St. Aubert; nd as the château was not large enough to accommodate their ervants, the latter were dismissed to the neighbouring village.

Before they separated for the night, M. Quesnel desired to peak with St. Aubert alone; and they retired to another room, vhere they remained a considerable time. The subject of this onversation was not known: but, whatever it might be, St. Aubert, when he returned to the supper-room, seemed much isturbed; and a shade of sorrow sometimes fell upon his eatures that alarmed Madame St. Aubert.

On the following day, before M. Quesnel departed, he had second conference with St. Aubert.

Madame St. Aubert excused herself from sharing their usual vening walk, complaining that she was not quite well; and t. Aubert and Emily went out together.

On the following day symtoms of fever appeared; and t. Aubert, having sent for medical advice, learned that her isorder was a fever of the same nature as that from which he ad lately recovered. She had, indeed, taken the infection uring her attendance upon him; and her constitution being too veak to throw out the disease immediately, it had lurked in er veins, and occasioned the heavy languor of which she had

complained. On the seventh day the disorder was at its crisis. The physician assumed a graver manner, which she observed, and took occasion, when her family had once quitted the chamber, to tell him that she perceived her death was approaching.

Never had Emily felt the importance of the lessons which had taught her to restrain her sensibility so much as in these moments and never had she practised them with a triumph so complete. But when the last was over she sunk at once under the pressure of her sorrow, and then perceived that it was hope, as well as fortitude, which had hitherto supported her. St. Aubert was for a time too devoid of comfort himself to bestow any on his daughter.

Madame St. Aubert was interred in the neighbouring village church: her husband and daughter attended her to the grave, followed by a long train of the peasantry, who were sincere mourners of this excellent woman.

The first person who came to condole with St. Aubert was a M. Barreaux, an austere and seemingly unfeeling man. A taste for botany had introduced them to each other, for they had frequently met in their wanderings among the mountains. M. Barreaux had retired from the world, and almost from society, to live in a pleasant château on the skirts of the woods near La Vallée.

At this melancholy period St. Aubert was likewise visited by Madame Cheron, his only surviving sister, who had been some years a widow, and now resided on her own estate near Toulouse. The intercourse between them had not been very frequent.

At parting, she pressed him and her niece to make her an early visit. "Change of place will amuse you," said she; "and it is wrong to give way to grief."

St. Aubert acknowledged the truth of these words, of course; but at the same time felt more reluctant than ever to quit the spot which his past happiness had consecrated.

But there are calls which must be complied with, and of this kind was the visit he paid to his brother-in-law M. Quesnel. An affair of an interesting nature made it necessary that he

should delay the visit no longer; and, wishing to rouse Emily from her dejection, he took her with him to Epourville.

As the carriage entered upon the forest that adjoined his paternal domain, his eyes once more caught, between the chestnut avenue, the turreted corners of the château.

St. Aubert followed a gay Parisian servant to a parlour, where sat Monsieur and Madame Quesnel, who received him with a stately politeness, and, after a few formal words of condolement, seemed to have forgotten that they ever had a sister.

After some general conversation, St. Aubert requested to speak with him alone; and Emily, being left with Madame Quesnel, soon learned that a large party was invited to dine at the château, and was compelled to hear that nothing which was past and irremediable ought to prevent the festivity of the present hour.

St. Aubert, when he was told that company were expected, felt a mixed emotion of disgust and indignation against the insensibility of Quesnel, which prompted him to return home immediately. But he was informed that Madame Cheron had been asked to meet him; and when he looked at Emily, and considered that a time might come when the enmity of her uncle would be prejudicial to her, he determined not to incur it himself, by conduct which could be resented as indecorous by the very persons who now showed so little sense of decorum.

Among the visitors assembled at dinner were two Italian gentlemen of whom one was named Montoni, a distant relation of Madame Quesnel, a man about forty, of an uncommonly handsome person, with features manly and expressive, but whose countenance exhibited, upon the whole, more of the haughtiness of command, and the quickness of discernment, than of any other character.

Signor Cavigni, his friend, appeared to be about thirty—inferior in dignity, but equal to him in penetration of countenance, and superior in insinuation of manner.

Emily was shocked by the salutation with which Madame Cheron met her father.

"Dear brother," said she, "I am concerned to see you look so very ill; do, pray, have advice!"

St. Aubert answered with a melancholy smile, that he felt himself much as usual: but Emily's fears made her now fancy that her father looked worse than he really did.

St. Aubert ordered his carriage at an early hour, and Emily observed that he was more than usually silent and dejected on the way home.

On entering the château she felt more depressed than ever, for she more than ever missed the presence of that dear parent.

But what reason and effort may fail to do, time effects: week after week passed away, and each, as it passed, stole something from the harshness of her affliction, till it was mellowed to that tenderness which the feeling heart cherishes as sacred. St. Aubert, on the contrary, visibly declined in health. His physician now ordered him to travel.

For some days Emily was occupied in preparations to attend him; and he, by endeavours to diminish his expenses at home during the journey— a purpose which determined him at length to dismiss his domestics.

The physician had prescribed the air of Languedoc and Provence; and St. Aubert determined therefore to travel leisurely along the shores of the Mediterranean, towards Provence.

They retired early to their chamber on the night before their departure: but Emily had a few books and other things to collect, and the clock had struck twelve before she had finished, or had remembered that some of her drawing instruments, which she meant to take with her, were in the parlour below. As she went to fetch these, she passed her father's room, and perceiving the door half open, concluded that he was in his study; for, since the death of Madame St. Aubert, it had been frequently his custom to rise from his restless bed, and go thither to compose his mind. When she was below stairs she looked into this room, but without finding him; and as she returned to her chamber, she tapped at his door, and receiving

answer, stepped softly in, to be certain whether he was ere.

The room was dark, but a light glimmered through some nes of glass that were placed in the upper part of a closet- or.

Emily believed her father to be in the closet, and, surprised at he was up at so late an hour, apprehended he was unwell, d was going to inquire; but considering that her sudden pearance at this hour might alarm him, she removed her ht to the staircase, and then stepped softly to the closet.

On looking through the panes of glass, she saw him seated a small table, with papers before him, some of which he s reading with deep attention and interest, during which he en wept and sobbed aloud.

Presently he kneeled down, and, with a look so solemn as e had seldom seen him assume, and which was mingled with certain wild expression, that partook more of horror than of y other character, he prayed silently for a considerable time. When he rose, a ghastly paleness was on his countenance. ily was hastily retiring; but she saw him turn again to the pers, and she stopped. He took from among them a small se, and from thence a miniature picture. The rays of light l strongly upon it, and she perceived it to be that of a lady t not of her mother.

St. Aubert gazed earnestly and tenderly upon his portrait, t it to his lips, and then to his heart, and sighed with a nvulsive force.

At length St. Aubert returned the picture to its case; and ily, recollecting that she was intruding upon his private rrows, softly withdrew from the chamber.

CHAPTER II

. Aubert, instead of taking the more direct road that n along the feet of the Pyrenees to Languedoc, chose one at, winding over the heights, afforded more extensive views d greater variety of romantic scenery.

He and Emily continued sunk in musing silence for some leagues; from which melancholy reverie Emily first awoke, and her young fancy, struck with the grandeur of the objects around, gradually yielded to delightful impressions.

Emily could not restrain her transport as she looked over the pine forests of the mountains, upon the vast plains that (enriched with woods, towns, blushing vines, and plantations of almonds, palms, and olives) stretched along, till their various colours melted in distance into one harmonious hue, that seemed to unite earth with heaven. Through the whole of this glorious scene the majestic Garonne wandered, descending from its source among the Pyrenees, and winding its blue waves towards the Bay of Biscay.

The ruggedness of the unfrequented road often obliged the wanderers to alight from their little carriage; but they thought themselves amply repaid for this inconvenience by the grandeur of the scenes; and, while the muleteer led his animals slowly over the broken ground, the travellers had leisure to linger amid these solitudes.

They had provided against part of the evil to be encountered from a want of convenient inns, by carrying a stock of provisions in the carriage; so that they might take refreshment on any pleasant spot, in the open air, and pass the nights wherever they should happen to meet with a comfortable cottage.

Soon after midday they reached the summit of one of those cliffs, which, bright with the verdure of palm-trees, adorn, like gems, the tremendous walls of the rocks, and which overlooked the greater part of Gascony and part of Languedoc.

This was a spot well suited for rest, and the travellers alighted to dine.

St. Aubert called to the muleteer, who sat at a little distance, concerning a road among the mountains towards Roussillon. Michael said there were several that way, but he did not know how far they extended, or even whether they were passable; and St. Aubert, who did not intend to travel after sunset, asked what village they could reach about that time. The muleteer calculated that they could easily reach Mateau, which was in

heir present road; but that if they took a road that sloped nore to the south, towards Roussillon, there was a hamlet, vhich he thought they could gain before the evening shut in.

St. Aubert, after some hesitation, determined to take the atter course.

The sun was now setting upon the valley—its last light gleamed upon the water, and heightened the rich yellow and purple tints of the heath and broom that overspread the mountains. St. Aubert inquired of Michael the distance to the hamlet he had mentioned, but the man could not with certainty tell; and Emily began to fear that he had mistaken the road. Here was no human being to assist or direct them.

They travelled on, sunk in that thoughtful melancholy with vhich twilight and solitude impress the mind. They were at length roused by the sound of fire-arms. St. Aubert called to he muleteer to stop, and they listened. The noise was not epeated; but presently they heard a rustling among the brakes. St. Aubert drew forth a pistol, and ordered Michael to proceed as fast as possible; who had not long obeyed before a horn ounded that made the valley ring. He looked again from the vindow, and then saw a young man spring from the bushes nto the road, followed by a couple of dogs. The stranger was n a hunter's dress; his gun was slung across his shoulders; the unter's horn hung from his belt; and in his hand was a small ike, which, as he held it, added to the manly grace of his igure, and assisted the agility of his steps.

After a moment's hesitation, St. Aubert again stopped the arriage, and waited till he came up, that they might inquire oncerning the hamlet they were in search of. The stranger nformed him that it was only half a league distant; that he vas going thither himself, and would readily show the way. St. Aubert thanked him for the offer, and, pleased with his hevalier-like air and open countenance, asked him to take a eat in the carriage; which the stranger, with an acknowedgment, declined, adding that he would keep pace with the nules.

"I perceive you are not one of the inhabitants, sir," said St. Aubert.

"No, sir; I am only a wanderer here."

At length the village lights were seen to twinkle through the dusk, and soon after, some cottages were discovered in the valley.

The stranger now came up; and St. Aubert, on further inquiry, found not only that there was no inn in the place, but not any sort of house of public reception. The stranger, however, offered to walk on, and inquire for a cottage to accommodate them; for which further civility St. Aubert returned his thanks, and said, that, as the village was so near, he would alight and walk with him. Emily followed slowly in the carriage.

On the way St. Aubert asked his companion what success he had had in the chase.

"Not much, sir," he replied; "nor do I aim at it: I am pleased with the country, and mean to saunter away a few weeks among its scenes: my dogs I take with me more for companionship than for game: this dress, too, gives me an ostensible business, and procures me that respect from the people which would, perhaps, be refused to a lonely stranger who had no visible motive for coming among them."

They now arrived at the village, and commenced their search for a cottage that would afford a night's lodging. In several which they entered ignorance, poverty, and mirth seemed equally to prevail; and the owners eyed St. Aubert with a mixure of curiosity and timidity.

Emily turned from such scenes, and looked at her father with anxious tenderness, which the young stranger seemed to observe; for, drawing St. Aubert aside, he made him an offer of his own bed.

St. Aubert at length consented.

On their way, the stranger, whose name was Valancourt, stepped on first to speak to his hostess; and she came out to welcome St. Aubert into a cottage much superior to any he had seen.

It was late when St. Aubert and Emily retired to their rooms, and Valancourt to his station at the door, which, at this mild season, he preferred to a close cabin and a bed of skins.

St. Aubert awoke at an early hour, refreshed by sleep, and desirous to set forward. He invited the stranger to breakfast with him; and, talking again of the road, Valancourt said that some months past he had travelled as far as Beaujeu, which was a town of some consequence on the way to Roussillon. He recommended it to St. Aubert to take that route; and the latter determined to do so.

"The road from this hamlet," said Valancourt, "and that to Beaujeu, part at the distance of about a league and a half from hence: if you will give me leave, I will direct your muleteer so far. I must wander somewhere; and your company would make this a pleasanter ramble than any other I could take."

St. Aubert thankfully accepted his offer, and they set out together—the young stranger on foot; for he refused the invitation of St. Aubert to take a seat in his little carriage.

The road wound along the feet of the mountains, through a pastoral valley bright with verdure, and varied with groves of dwarf oak, beech and sycamore, under whose branches herds of cattle reposed.

St. Aubert was sorry when they came to the spot where the roads parted; and his heart took a more affectionate leave of him than is usual after so short an acquaintance.

Valancourt talked long by the side of the carriage; seemed more than once to be going, but still lingered, and appeared to search anxiously for topics of conversation to account for his delay. At length he took leave.

As he went, St. Aubert observed him look with an earnest and pensive eye at Emily, who bowed to him with a countenance full of timid sweetness, while the carriage drove on.

The travellers again took their dinner in the open air, on a pleasant spot in the valley, under the spreading shade of cedars; and then set forward towards Beaujeu.

The road now began to descend, and, leaving the pine forest

behind, wound among rocky precipices. The evening twilight again fell over the scene, and the travellers were ignorant how far they might yet be from Beaujeu.

On turning the angle of a mountain, a light appeared at a distance, that illumined the rocks and the horizon to a great extent. It was evidently a large fire; but whether accidental or otherwise, there were no means of knowing. St. Aubert thought it was probably kindled by some of the numerous banditti that infested the Pyrenees, and he became watchful and anxious to know whether the road passed near this fire. He had arms with him, which on an emergency might afford some protection, though certainly a very unequal one against a band of robbers, so desperate too as those usually were who haunted these wild regions. While many reflections rose upon his mind, he heard a voice shouting from the road behind, and ordering the muleteer to stop. St. Aubert bade him proceed as fast as possible; but either Michael or his mules were obstinate, for they did not quit the old pace. Horses' feet were now heard, a man rode up to the carriage, still ordering the driver to stop; and St. Aubert, who could no longer doubt his purpose, was with difficulty able to prepare a pistol for his defence, when his hand was upon the door of the chaise. The man staggered on his horse; the report of the pistol was followed by a groan; and St. Aubert's horror may be imagined, when in the next instant he thought he heard the faint voice of Valancourt. He now himself bade the muleteer stop; and, pronouncing the name of Valancourt, was answered in a voice that no longer suffered him to doubt. St. Aubert, who instantly alighted and went to his assistance, found him still sitting on his horse, but bleeding profusely, and appearing to be in great pain, though he endeavoured to soften the terror of St. Aubert by assurances that he was not materially hurt, the wound being only in his arm. St. Aubert, with the muleteer, assisted him to dismount, and he sat down on the bank of the road, where St. Aubert tried to bind up his arm. This stopped the effusion of the blood. The muleteer assisted him into the chaise; and they moved slowly on towards Beaujeu.

St. Aubert, when he had recovered from the terror occasioned him by this accident, expressed surprise on seeing Valancourt, who explained his unexpected appearance by saying, "You, sir, renewed my taste for society; when you had left the hamlet, it did appear a solitude. I determined, therefore, since my object was merely amusement, to change the scene, and I took this road, because I knew it led through a more romantic tract of mountains than the spot I have left."

After a league and a half more passed in darkness, the travellers arrived at Beaujeu, and drove up to the only inn the place afforded; which, though superior to any they had seen since they entered the mountains, was bad enough.

The surgeon of the town was immediately sent for. After examining Valancourt's arm, and perceiving that the bullet had passed through the flesh without touching the bone, he dressed it, and left him with a solemn prescription of quiet, which his patient was not inclined to obey.

The travellers passed an agreeable evening; but St. Aubert was fatigued with his journey, and as Valancourt seemed again sensible of pain, they separated soon after supper.

Valancourt's indisposition detained the travellers at Beaujeu several days, during which interval St. Aubert had observed his disposition and his talents with the philosophic inquiry so natural to him. He saw a frank and generous nature, full of ardour, highly susceptible of whatever is grand and beautiful, but impetuous, wild, and somewhat romantic. Valancourt had known little of the world. He determined not to leave Valancourt till he should be perfectly recovered; and, as he was now well enough to travel, though not able to manage his horse, St. Aubert invited him to accompany him for a few days in the carriage. This he the more readily did, since he had discovered that Valancourt was of a family of the same name in Gascony, with whose respectability he was well acquainted. The latter accepted the offer with great pleasure, and they again set forward among these romantic wilds towards Roussillon.

The travellers had lingered so long among the sublimer scenes of these mountains, that they found themselves entirely

mistaken in their calculation that they could reach Montigny at sunset. They continued to travel long after twilight had obscured the road, which was so broken that, now thinking it safer to walk than to ride, they all alighted. The moon was rising, but her light was yet too feeble to assist them. While they stepped carefully on, they heard the vesper-bell of a convent. The twilight would not permit them to distinguish anything like a building, but the sounds seemed to come from some woods that overhung an acclivity to the right.

St. Aubert took Emily's arm within his, and, telling Michael to wait awhile in the road with the carriage, they began to ascend towards the woods, guided by the bell of the convent.

Having emerged from the woods, they saw, upon a turfy hillock above, the convent of which they were in search. A high wall that surrounded it led them to an ancient gate, at which they knocked; and the poor monk who opened it conducted them into a small adjoining room, where he desired they would wait while he informed the superior of their request.

After a short conversation, formal and solemn on the part of the superior, they withdrew to the apartment where they were to sup.

While St. Aubert was too much indisposed to share it, Emily, in her anxiety for her father, forgot herself; and Valancourt, silent and thoughtful, yet never inattentive to them, appeared particularly solicitious to accommodate and relieve St. Aubert; who often observed, while his daughter was pressing him to eat or adjusting the pillow she had placed in the back of his arm-chair, that Valancourt fixed on her a look of pensive tenderness, which she was not displeased to understand.

They separated at an early hour, and retired to their respective apartments.

CHAPTER III

St. Aubert, sufficiently restored by a night's repose to pursue his journey, set out in the morning, with his family and

Valancourt for Roussillon, which he hoped to reach before nightfall. The scenes through which they now passed were as wild and romantic as any they had yet observed; with this difference, that beauty, every now and then, softened the landscape into smiles.

Little woody recesses appeared among the mountains, covered with bright verdure and flowers; or a pastoral valley opened its grassy bosom in the shade of the cliffs, with flocks and herds loitering along the banks of a rivulet that refreshed it with perpetual green.

St. Aubert, as he sometimes lingered to examine the wild plants in his path, often looked forward with pleasure to Emily and Valancourt as they strolled on together—he with a countenance of animated delight pointing to her attention some grand feature of the scene; and she listening and observing with a look of tender seriousness that spoke the elevation of her mind. They appeared like two lovers who had never strayed beyond these their native mountains; whose situation had secluded them from the frivolities of common life; whose ideas were simple and grand, like the landscapes among which they moved; and who knew no other happiness than in the union of pure and affectionate hearts.

It was evening when they descended the lower Alps that bind Roussillon and form a majestic barrier round that charming country, leaving it open only on the east to the Mediterranean. Groves of orange and lemon perfumed the air, their ripe fruit glowing among the foliage; while, sloping to the plains, extensive vineyards spread their treasures. Beyond these, woods and pastures, and mingled towns and hamlets, stretched towards the sea, on whose bright surface gleamed many a distant sail; while over the whole scene was diffused the purple glow of evening.

The travellers, having reached the plains, proceeded between hedges of flowering myrtle and pomegranate to the town of Arles, where they proposed to rest for the night. They met with simple but neat accommodation, and would have passed a happy evening, after the toils and the delights of this day,

had not the approaching separation thrown a gloom over their spirit. It was St. Aubert's plan to proceed on the morrow to the borders of the Mediterranean, and travel along its shores into Languedoc; and Valancourt, since he was now nearly recovered, and had no longer a pretence for continuing with his new friends, resolved to leave them here.

In the morning Valancourt breakfasted with St. Aubert and Emily, neither of whom seemed much refreshed by sleep.

At the commencement of their acquaintance, Valancourt had made known his name and family. St. Aubert was not a stranger to either; for the family estates, which were now in the possession of an elder brother of Valancourt, were little more than twenty miles distant from La Vallée, and he had sometimes met the elder Valancourt on visits in the neighbourhood. This knowledge had made him more willingly receive his present companion.

The breakfast was almost as silent as the supper of the preceding night; but their musing was at length interrupted by the sound of the carriage wheels which were to bear away St. Aubert and family. Valancourt started from his chair, and went to the window; it was indeed the carriage, and he returned to his seat without speaking. The moment was now come when they must part. St. Aubert told Valancourt that he hoped he would never pass La Vallée without favouring him with a visit; and Valancourt, eagerly thanking him, assured him that he never would. The latter lingered at the door several minutes after they were seated, and none of the party seemed to have courage enough to say—Farewell ! At length St. Aubert pronounced the melancholy word, which Emily passed to Valancourt, who returned it with a dejected smile, and the carriage drove on.

They arrived at Perpignan soon after sunset, where St. Aubert found, as he had expected, letters from M. Quesnel; the contents of which so evidently and grievously affected him, that Emily was alarmed, and pressed him, as far as her delicacy would permit, to disclose the occasion of his concern:

but he answered her only by tears, and immediately began to talk on other topics.

In the morning they pursued their journey along the coast towards Leucate, another town on the Mediterranean, situated on the borders of Languedoc and Roussillon.

On the way, Emily renewed the subject of the preceding night, and appeared so deeply affected by St. Aubert's silence and dejection, that he relaxed from his reserve.

"M. Quesnel's visit proved an unhappy one to me; he came to tell me part of the news he has confirmed. You may have heard me mention a M. Motteville of Paris, but you did not know that the chief of my personal property was invested in his hands.

"I had great confidence in him, and I am yet willing to believe that he is not wholly unworthy of my esteem. A variety of circumstances have concurred to ruin him, and—I am ruined with him."

St. Aubert paused to conceal his emotion.

"The letters I have just received from M. Quesnel," resumed he, struggling to speak with firmness, "enclosed others from Motteville, which confirmed all I dreaded."

"Must we then quit La Vallée?" said Emily, after a long pause of silence.

"That is yet uncertain," replied St. Aubert; "it will depend upon the compromise Motteville is able to make with his creditors. My income, you know, was never large, and now it will be reduced to little indeed! It is for you, Emily—for you, my child—that I am most afflicted." His last words faltered.

They reached the romantic town of Leucate early in the day; but St. Aubert was weary, and they determined to pass the night there.

On the following day, they recommenced their journey through Languedoc, winding the shores of the Mediterranean; the Pyrenees still forming the magnificent background of their prospects, while on their right was the ocean, and on their left, wide extended plains melting into the blue horizon.

It was evening when they reached a small village of Upper

Languedoc, where they meant to pass the night, but the place could not afford them beds; for here it was the time of the vintage; and they were obliged to proceed to the next post. The languor of illness and of fatigue, which returned upon St. Aubert, required immediate repose, and the evening was now far advanced; but from necessity there was no appeal, and he ordered Michael to proceed.

He sunk back in the carriage, and Michael, cracking his whip in the air, set off, and continued on the full gallop, till St. Aubert, almost fainting, called to him to stop. Emily looked anxiously from the window, and saw a peasant walking at some little distance on the road, for whom they waited till he came up, when he was asked if there was any house in the neighbourhood that accommodated travellers.

He replied that he knew of none. "There is a château, indeed, among those woods on the right," added he, "but I believe it receives nobody, and I cannot show you the way, for I am almost a stranger here."

St. Aubert was going to ask him some further question concerning the château, but the man abruptly passed on. After some consideration, he ordered Michael to proceed slowly to the woods. Every moment now deepened the twilight and increased the difficulty of finding the road. Another peasant soon after passed.

"Which is the way to the château in the woods?" cried Michael.

"The château in the woods!" exclaimed the peasant—"Do you mean that with the turret yonder?"

"I don't know as for the turret, as you call it," said Michael; "I mean that white piece of a building that we see at a distance there, among the trees."

"Yes, that is the turret; why, who are you, that you are going thither?" said the man with surprise.

St. Aubert, on hearing this odd question, and observing the peculiar tone in which it was delivered, looked out from the carriage.

"We are travellers," said he, "who are in search of a house f accommodation for the night; is there any hereabout ?"

"None, monsieur, unless you have a mind to try your luck onder," replied the peasant, pointing to the woods; "but I vould not advise you to go there."

"To whom does the château belong ?"

"I scarcely know myself, monsieur."

"It is uninhabited, then ?"

"No, not uninhabited; the steward and housekeeper are here, I believe."

On hearing this, St. Aubert determined to proceed to the château, and risk the refusal of being accommodated for the ight: he therefore desired the countryman would show Michael ne way, and bade him expect reward for his trouble. The nan was for a moment silent, and then said that he was going n other business, but that the road could not be missed, if ney went up an avenue to the right, to which he pointed.

The carriage now moved towards the avenue, which was uarded by a gate; and Michael having dismounted to open it, ney entered between rows of ancient oak and chestnut, whose ntermingled branches formed a lofty arch above. There was omething so gloomy and desolate in the appearance of this venue and its lonely silence, that Emily almost shuddered as ne passed along; and recollecting the manner in which the easant had mentioned the château, she gave a mysterious neaning to his words, such as she had not suspected when he ttered them.

They passed slowly on, for they were now almost in darkness, vhich, together with the unevenness of the ground, and the requent roots of old trees that shot up above the soil, made necessary to proceed with caution. On a sudden Michael topped the carriage; and as St. Aubert looked from the vindow to inquire the cause, he perceived a figure at some istance moving up the avenue. The dusk would not permit im to distinguish what it was, but he bade Michael go on.

"This seems a wild place," said Michael; "there is no house erabout; don't your honour think we had better turn back ?"

"Go a little farther, and if we see no house then, we will return to the road," replied St. Aubert.

Michael proceeded with reluctance; and the extreme slowness of his pace made St. Aubert look again from the window to hasten him, when again he saw the same figure. He was somewhat startled; probably the gloominess of the spot made him more liable to alarm than usual. However this might be, he now stopped Michael, and bade him call to the person in the avenue.

"Please your honour, he may be a robber," said Michael.

"It does not please me," replied St. Aubert, who could not forbear smiling at the simplicity of his phrase; "and we will therefore return to the road, for I see no probability of meeting here with what we seek."

Michael turned about immediately, and was retracing his way with alacrity, when a voice was heard from among the trees on the left. It was not the voice of command or distress; but a deep hollow tone, which seemed to be scarcely human. The man whipped his mules till they went as fast as possible, regardless of the darkness, the broken ground, and the necks of the whole party; nor once stopped till he reached the gate which opened from the avenue into the high road, where he went into a more moderate pace.

"I am very ill," said St. Aubert, taking his daughter's hand.

"You are worse, then, sir !" said Emily, extremely alarmed by his manner; "you are worse, and here is no assistance ! Good God ! what is to be done ?"

He leaned his head on her shoulder, while she endeavoured to support him with her arm; and Michael was again ordered to stop. When the rattling of the wheels had ceased, music was heard on the air: it was to Emily the voice of Hope.

"Oh ! we are near some human habitation !" said she: "help may soon be had."

She listened anxiously; the sounds were distant, and seemed to come from a remote part of the woods that bordered the road; and as she looked towards the spot whence they issued, she perceived in the faint moonlight something like a château.

was difficult, however, to reach this. St. Aubert was now too
to bear the motion of the carriage; Michael could not quit
s mules; and Emily, who still supported her father, feared to
ave him, and also feared to venture alone to such a distance,
e knew not whither, or to whom. Something, however, it
as necessary to determine upon immediately: St. Aubert,
erefore, told Michael to proceed slowly; but they had not
ne far, when he fainted, and the carriage was again stopped.
e lay quite senseless.

"My dear, dear father!" cried Emily in great agony, who
gan to fear that he was dying; "speak, if it is only one word,
let me hear the sound of your voice!"

But no voice spoke in reply. In the agony of terror she bade
ichael bring water from the rivulet that flowed along the
ad; and having received some in the man's hat, with
embling hands, she sprinkled it over her father's face, which,
the moon's rays now fell upon it, seemed to bear the impres-
on of death. Every emotion of selfish fear now gave way to a
ronger influence; and committing St. Aubert to the care of
ichael, who refused to go far from his mules, she stepped
om the carriage in search of the château she had seen at a
istance. It was a still moonlight night, and the music, which
et sounded on the air, directed her steps from the high road
p a shadowy lane that led to the woods. Her mind was for
me time so entirely occupied by anxiety and terror for her
ther, that she felt none for herself, till the deepening gloom
the overhanging foliage, which now wholly excluded the
oonlight, and the wildness of the place, recalled her to a sense
her adventurous situation. The music had ceased, and she
ad no guide but chance. For a moment she paused in terrified
erplexity; till a sense of her father's condition again over-
oming every consideration for herself, she proceeded. The lane
rminated in the woods; but she looked round in vain for a
ouse or a human being, and as vainly listened for a sound
guide her. She hurried on, however, not knowing whither,
voiding the recesses of the woods, and endeavouring to keep
ong their margin, till a rude kind of avenue, which opened

upon a moonlight spot, arrested her attention. The wildness of this avenue brought to her recollection the one leading to the turreted château, and she was inclined to believe that this was a part of the same domain, and probably led to the same point. While she hesitated whether to follow it or not, a sound of many voices in loud merriment burst upon her ear; it seemed not the laugh of cheerfulness but of riot; and she stood appalled. While she paused, she heard a distant voice calling from the way she had come, and not doubting but it was that of Michael, her first impulse was to hasten back; but a second thought changed her purpose—she believed that nothing less than the last extremity could have prevailed with Michael to quit his mules; and fearing that her father was now dying, she rushed forward, with a feeble hope of obtaining assistance from the people in the woods.

Her heart beat with fearful expectation as she drew near the spot whence the voices issued, and she often startled when her steps disturbed the fallen leaves. The sounds led her towards the moonlight glade she had before noticed; at a little distance from which she stopped, and saw between the boles of the trees a small circular level of green turf, surrounded by the woods, on which appeared a group of figures. On drawing nearer, she distinguished these, by their dress, to be peasants, and perceived several cottages scattered round the edge of the woods, which waved loftily over this spot. While she gazed, and endeavoured to overcome the apprehensions that withheld her steps, several peasant girls came out of a cottage; music instantly struck up, and the dance began. She stepped hastily forwards towards a group of elder persons who were seated at the door of a cottage, and, having explained her situation, entreated their assistance. Several of them rose with alacrity, and, offering any service in their power, followed Emily, who seemed to move on the wind, as fast as they could towards the road.

When she reached the carriage she found St. Aubert restored to animation. He was, however, still languid; and perceiving himself unable to travel much farther, he renewed his inquiries for an inn, and concerning the château in the woods.

"The château cannot accommodate you, sir," said a vener-
ble peasant who had followed Emily from the woods; "it is
arcely inhabited; but if you will do me the honour to visit
y cottage, you shall be welcome to the best bed it affords."
The carriage again moved slowly on; Michael following the
easants up the lane which Emily had just quitted.
At length the carriage stopped at a neat cottage; and his
enerable conductor having assisted St. Aubert to alight, led
m and Emily to a small inner room, illuminated only by
oonbeams which the open casement admitted. St. Aubert,
joicing in rest, seated himself in an arm-chair, and his senses
ere refreshed by the cool and balmy air that lightly waved
e embowering honeysuckles, and wafted their sweet breath
to the apartment. His host, who was called La Voisin, quitted
e room, but soon returned with fruits, cream, and all the
storal luxury his cottage afforded; having set down which
ith a smile of unfeigned welcome, he retired behind the chair
his guest. Emily sat by her father holding his hand. The soft
oonlight of an autumnal evening, and the distant music which
w sounded a plaintive strain, aided the melancholy of her
ind. The old man continued to talk of his family, and St.
ubert remained silent.
La Voisin felt that he had pursued the subject too far, and
dropped it, saying, "We are in darkness, I forgot to bring a
ght."
"No," said St. Aubert, "this is a light I love; sit down, my
od friend. I can enjoy this tranquil hour, and that music
hich floats so sweetly at a distance. Let me see you smile.
ho touches that guitar so tastefully? Are there two instru-
ents, or is it an echo I hear?"
"It is an echo, monsieur, I fancy. That guitar is often heard
night, when all is still, but nobody knows who touches it;
d it is sometimes accompanied by a voice so sweet and so
d, that one would almost think the woods were haunted."
"They certainly are haunted," said St. Aubert with a smile;
ut I believe it is by mortals."
"I have sometimes heard it at midnight, when I could not

sleep," rejoined La Voisin, not seeming to notice this remark, "almost under my window; and I never heard any music like it: it has often made me think of my poor wife till I cried. I have sometimes got up to the window, to look if I could see anybody; but as soon as I opened the casement, all was hushed, and nobody to be seen; and I have listened and listened, till I have been so timorous that even the trembling of the leaves in the breeze has made me start. They say it often comes to warn people of their death; but I have heard it these many years, and outlived the warning."

Emily, though she smiled at the mention of this ridiculous superstition, could not, in the present tone of her spirits, wholly resist its contagion.

"Well, but my good friend," said St. Aubert, "has nobody had courage to follow the sounds? If they had, they would probably have discovered who is the musician."

"Yes, sir, they have followed them some way into the woods; but the music has still retreated, and seemed as distant as ever; and the people have at last been afraid of being led into harm, and would go no farther. It is very seldom that I have heard these sounds so early in the evening; they usually come about midnight, when that bright planet, which is rising above the turret yonder, sets below the woods on the left."

"What turret?" asked St. Aubert, with quickness, "I see none."

"Your pardon, monsieur, you do see one indeed, for the moon shines full upon it—up the avenue yonder, a long way off: the château it belongs to is hid among the trees."

"Yes, my dear sir," said Emily, pointing; "don't you see something glitter above the dark woods? It is a vane, I fancy, which the rays fall upon."

"Oh, yes; I see what you mean. And whom does the château belong to?"

"The Marquis de Villeroi was its owner," replied La Voisin emphatically.

"Ah!" said St. Aubert, with a deep sigh, "are we then so near Le-Blanc?" He appeared much agitated.

"It used to be the Marquis's favourite residence," resumed La oisin; "but he took a dislike to the place, and has not been ere for many years. We have heard lately that he is dead, d that it is fallen into other hands."

St. Aubert, who had sat in deep musing, was roused by the st words. "Dead!" he exclaimed: "Good God! when did die?"

"He is reported to have died about five weeks since," replied a Voisin. "Did you know the Marquis, sir?"

"This is very extraordinary!" said St. Aubert, without tending to the question.

"Why is it so, my dear sir?" said Emily, in a voice of timid riosity.

He made no reply, but sunk again into a reverie; and in a w moments, when he seemed to have recovered himself, asked ho had succeeded to the estates.

"I have forgot his title, monsieur," said La Voisin; "but my rd resides at Paris chiefly; I hear no talk of his coming ther."

"The château is shut up then still?"

"Why, little better, sir; the old housekeeper and her husband e steward have the care of it, but they live generally in a ttage hard by."

"The château is spacious, I suppose?" said Emily, "and must desolate for the residence of only two persons."

"Desolate enough, mademoiselle," replied La Voisin: "I ould not pass one night in the château for the value of the hole domain."

"What is that?" said St. Aubert, roused again from thought- lness. As his host repeated his last sentence, a groan escaped om St. Aubert, and then, as if anxious to prevent it from ing noticed, he hastily asked La Voisin how long he had ved in this neighbourhood. "Almost from my childhood, sir," plied his host.

"You remember the late Marchioness, then?" said St. Aubert an altered voice.

"Ah, monsieur !—that I do well. There are many besides me who remember her."

"Yes," said St. Aubert—"and I am one of those."

"Alas, sir ! you remember then a most beautiful and excellent lady. She deserved a better fate."

Tears stood in St. Aubert's eyes.—"Enough," said he, in a voice almost stifled by the violence of his emotions—"it is enough, my friend."

Emily, though extremely surprised by her father's manner, forbore to express her feelings by any question.

La Voisin began to apologize, but St. Aubert interrupted him. "Apology is quite unnecessary," said he; "let us change the topic. You were speaking of the music we just now heard."

"I was, monsieur—but hark ! it comes again; listen to that voice !"

In a few moments the voice died into air, and the instrument which had been heard before, sounded in low symphony.

St. Aubert now observed that it produced a tone much more full and melodious than that of a guitar, and still more melancholy and soft than the lute.

They continued to listen, but the sounds returned no more.

"This is strange !" said St. Aubert, at length interrupting the silence.

"Very strange !" said Emily.

"It is so," rejoined La Voisin: and they were again silent.

After a long pause, "It is now about eighteen years since I first heard that music," said La Voisin; "I remember it was on a fine summer's night, much like this, but later, that I was walking in the woods, and alone. I remember, too, that my spirits were very low, for one of my boys was ill, and we feared we should lose him. I had been watching at his bedside all the evening, while his mother slept; for she had sat up with him the night before. I had been watching, and went out for a little fresh air: the day had been very sultry. As I walked under the shades, and mused, I heard music at a distance, and thought it was Claude playing upon his flute, as he often did of a fine evening, at the cottage door. But when I came to a place where

ıe trees opened (I shall never forget it !) and stood looking up
: the north-lights, which shot up the heaven to a great height,
heard all of a sudden such sounds !—they came so as I cannot
escribe. It was like the music of angels; and I looked up again,
most expecting to see them in the sky. When I came home, I
old what I had heard; but they laughed at me, and said it
ust be some of the shepherds playing on their pipes, and I
ould not persuade them to the contrary. A few nights after,
owever, my wife herself heard the same sounds, and was as
uch surprised as I was; and Father Denis frightened her sadly,
y saying that it was music come to warn her of her child's
eath, and that music often came to houses where there was a
ying person."

Emily, on hearing this, shrunk with a superstitious dread
ntirely new to her, and could scarcely conceal her agitation
om St. Aubert.

"But the boy lived, monsieur, in spite of Father Denis."

"Father Denis !" said St. Aubert, who had listened to "nar-
ative old age" with patient attention. "Are we near a convent,
ien ?"

"Yes, sir; the convent of St. Clair stands at no great
istance—on the seashore yonder."

"Ah !" said St. Aubert, as if struck with some sudden remem-
rance. "The convent of St. Clair !"

Emily observed the clouds of grief, mingled with a faint
xpression of horror, gathering on his brow.

"But, my dear sir," said Emily, anxious to dissipate his
houghts, "you forget that repose is necessary to you. If our
ind host will give me leave, I will prepare your bed, for I
now how you like it to be made."

CHAPTER IV

m i l y, called, as she had requested, at an early hour, awoke
ttle refreshed by sleep, for uneasy dreams had pursued her,
nd marred the kindest blessing of the unhappy. But when she
pened her casement, looked out upon the woods, bright with

the morning sun, and inspired the pure air, her mind was soothed.

As she left the room, St. Aubert, who was now risen, met her at the door, apparently as little restored by sleep as herself. She led him downstairs to the little parlour in which they had supped on the preceding night, where they found a neat breakfast set out, while the host and his daughter waited to bid them good-morrow.

Emily, who had observed her father with attention, and thought he looked very ill, endeavoured to persuade him to defer travelling till the afternoon; but he seemed very anxious to be at home, and his anxiety he expressed repeatedly and with an earnestness that was unusual with him. But while he was talking with his venerable host, and thanking him for his kind attentions, Emily observed his countenance change, and before she could reach him he fell back in his chair. In a few moments he recovered from the sudden faintness that had come over him; but felt so ill that he perceived himself unable to set out; and having remained a little while, struggling against the pressure of indisposition, he begged he might be helped upstairs to bed.

When he was once more in bed, he desired that Emily, who was then weeping in her own room, might be called; and as she came, he waved his hand for every other person to quit the apartment. When they were alone, he held out his hand to her, and fixed his eyes upon her countenance, with an expression so full of tenderness and grief, that all her fortitude forsook her, and she burst into an agony of tears.

"My dear child," said he, trying to smile through his anguish, "my dear Emily !" and paused again.

"Let me not waste these moments," said St. Aubert, recovering himself; "I have much to say. There is a circumstance of solemn consequence which I have to mention, and a solemn promise to obtain from you; when this is done I shall be easier. You have observed, my dear, how anxious I am to reach home, but know not all my reasons for this. Listen to what I am going

say. Yet stay, before I say more, give me this promise, a romise made to your dying father !"

Emily, awed by the earnest solemnity of his manner, dried er tears, that had begun again to flow in spite of her efforts suppress them, and, looking eloquently at St. Aubert, bound erself to do whatever he should require, by a vow, at which e shuddered, yet knew not why.

He proceeded:

"I know you too well, my Emily, to believe that you would reak any promise, much less one thus solemnly given; your surance gives me peace, and the observance of it is of the most importance to your tranquillity. Hear, then, what I n going to tell you. The closet which adjoins my chamber at a Vallée has a sliding board in the floor: you will know it by remarkable knot in the wood, and by its being the next board, xcept one, to the wainscot which fronts the door. At the stance of about a yard from that end, nearer the window, you ill perceive a line across it, as if the plank had been joined. he way to open it is this: press your foot upon the line; the nd of the board will then sink, and you may slide it with ease eneath the other. Below, you will see a hollow place." St. ubert paused for breath, and Emily sat fixed in deep ttention. "Do you understand these directions, my dear ?" said e. Emily, though scarcely able to speak, assured him that she d.

St. Aubert, who now spoke with pain, resumed the subject. That closet, my dear,—when you return home, go to it; and eneath the board I have described you will find a packet of ritten papers. Attend to me now, for the promise you have ven particularly relates to what I shall direct. These papers ou must burn—and, solemnly I command you, *without xamining them.*"

Emily's surprise for a moment overcame her grief, and she ntured to ask why this must be.

St. Aubert replied, that, if it had been right for him to plain his reasons, her late promise would have been nnecessarily exacted. "It is sufficient for you, my love, to

have a deep sense of the importance of observing me in this instance."

St. Aubert proceeded: "Under that board you will also find about two hundred louis-d'ors wrapped in a silk purse. Indeed, it was to secure whatever money might be in the château, that this secret place was contrived, at a time when the province was overrun by troops of men who took advantage of the tumults and became plunderers.

"But I have yet another promise to receive from you, which is—that you will never, whatever may be your future circumstances, *sell* the château." St. Aubert even enjoined her, whenever she might marry, to make it an article in her contract, that the château should always be hers.

After this conversation the mind of St. Aubert appeared to be much more at ease: but exhausted by the effort of speaking, he sunk into a kind of doze; and Emily continued to watch and weep beside him, till a gentle tap at the chamber-door roused her.

It was La Voisin, come to say that a confessor from the neighbouring convent was below, ready to attend St. Aubert.

St. Aubert, some time after, spoke of Madame Cheron, his sister.

"Let me inform you of a circumstance that nearly affects your welfare," he added. "We have, you know, had little intercourse for some years, but as she is now your only female relation, I have thought it proper to consign you to her care, as you will see in my will, till you are of age, and to recommend you to her protection afterwards. She is not exactly the person to whom I would have committed my Emily; but I had no alternative, and I believe her to be, upon the whole, a good kind of woman. I need not recommend it to your prudence, my love, to endeavour to conciliate her kindness—you will do this for his sake who has often wished to do so for yours."

Emily assured him that whatever he requested she would religiously perform to the utmost of her ability. "Alas!" added she, in a voice interrupted by sighs, "that will soon be all which

mains for me. It will be almost my only consolation to fulfil ur wishes."

St. Aubert lingered till about three o'clock in the afternoon, d thus gradually sinking into death, he expired without a uggle or a sigh.

Emily was led from the chamber by La Voisin and his ughter, who did what they could to comfort her.

St. Aubert had given a particular injunction that his remains ould be interred in the church of the convent of St. Clair, d, in mentioning the north chancel, near the ancient tomb the Villerois, had pointed out the exact spot where he wished be laid.

The superior had granted this place for the interment; and ither, therefore, the sad procession now moved; which was et at the gates by the venerable priest, followed by a train friars.

The abbess led Emily from the church into her own parlour, d there administered all the consolations that religion and ntle sympathy can give.

In the meantime she sent letters to Madame Cheron and to e old housekeeper, informing them of the sad event that had ken place, and her own situation. From her aunt she received answer, abounding more in commonplace condolement than traits of real sorrow, which assured her that a servant should sent to conduct her to La Vallée, for that her own time was much occupied by company, that she had no leisure to under-ke so long a journey.

However Emily might prefer La Vallée to Toulouse, she uld not be insensible to the indecorous and unkind conduct her aunt in suffering her to return thither, where she had longer a relation to console and protect her—a conduct hich was the more culpable since St. Aubert had appointed adame Cheron the guardian of his orphan daughter.

It was several days after the arrival of Madame Cheron's rvant before Emily was sufficiently recovered to undertake e journey to La Vallée. On the evening preceding her de-arture she went to the cottage to take leave of La Voisin and

his family, and to make them a return for their kindness.

She had travelled several leagues, before the scenes of the country through which she passed had power to rouse her for a moment from the deep melancholy into which she was sunk. Thus, without any particular occurrence, passed the day in languor and dejection. She slept that night in a town on the skirts of Languedoc, and on the following morning entered Gascony.

Toward the close of this day Emily came within view of the plains in the neighbourhood of La Vallée, and the well-known objects of former times began to press upon her notice, and, with them, recollections that awakened all her tenderness and grief.

As she drew near the château, these melancholy memorials of past times multiplied. At length the château itself appeared, amid the glowing beauty of St. Aubert's favourite landscape.

She raised her eyes on the sudden stoppage of the carriage, and saw her father's old housekeeper coming to open the gate. Manchon also came running and barking before her, and when his young mistress alighted, fawned and played round her, gasping with joy.

CHAPTER V

Emily, some time after her return to La Vallée, received letters from her aunt, Madame Cheron, in which, she invited her to Toulouse, and added, that, as her late brother had entrusted Emily's education to her, she should consider herself bound to overlook her conduct.

Though her affection would not suffer her to question, even for a moment, the propriety of St. Aubert's conduct in appointing Madame Cheron for her guardian, she was sensible that this step had made her happiness depend, in a great degree, on the humour of her aunt. In her reply she begged permission to remain at present at La Vallée; mentioning the extreme dejection of her spirits, and the necessity she felt for quiet and retirement to restore them. These she knew were not be found

t Madame Cheron's, whose inclinations led her into a life of issipation, which her ample fortune encouraged. And, having iven her answer, she felt somewhat more at ease.

In the first days of her affliction she was visited by Monieur Barreaux, a sincere mourner for St. Aubert.

Several weeks passed away in quiet retirement, and Emily's ffliction began to soften into melancholy. She could bear to ead the books she had before read with her father—to sit in is chair in the library—to watch the flowers his hand had lanted—to awaken the tones of that instrument his fingers ad pressed, and sometimes even to play his favourite air.

Madame Cheron returned no answer to Emily's letter; who egan to hope that she should be permitted to remain some time onger in her retirement; and her mind had now so far recovered ts strength that she ventured to view the scenes which most owerfully recalled the images of past times. Among these vas the fishing-house; and to indulge still more the affectionate nelancholy of the visit, she took thither her lute, that she night again hear there the tones to which St. Aubert and her nother had so often delighted to listen. She went alone, and t that still hour of the evening which is so soothing to fancy nd to grief.

The little path that led to the building was overgrown with rass. She went to the window that overhung the rivulet, and eaning over it, with her eyes fixed on the current, was soon ost in melancholy reverie. She continued to muse, unconscious f the gloom of evening, and that the sun's last light trembled n the heights above; and would probably have remained so nuch longer if a sudden footstep, without the building, had ot alarmed her attention, and first made her recollect that she vas unprotected. In the next moment the door opened, and a tranger appeared, who stopped on perceiving Emily, and then egan to apologize for his intrusion. But Emily, at the sound f his voice, lost her fear in a stronger emotion: its tones were amiliar to her ear; and, though she could not readily distinuish through the dusk the features of the person who spoke, he felt a remembrance too strong to be distrusted.

He repeated his apology, and Emily then said something in reply; when the stranger, eagerly advancing, exclaimed:

"Good God ! can it be ?—surely I am not mistaken—Ma'amselle St. Aubert ?—is it not ?"

"It is indeed," said Emily, who was confirmed in her first conjecture; for she now distinguished the countenance of Valancourt lighted up with still more than its usual animation.

Valancourt meanwhile, having inquired anxiously after her health, and expressed his hopes that Monsieur St. Aubert had found benefit from travelling, learned, from the flood of tears which she could no longer repress, the fatal truth.

"I feel," said he at length, "I feel how insufficient all attempt at consolation must be on this subject; I can only mourn with you; for I cannot doubt the source of your tears. Would to God I were mistaken !"

Emily could still answer only by tears, till she rose and begged they might leave the melancholy spot; when Valancourt, though he saw her feebleness, could not offer to detain her, but took her arm within his, and led her from the fishing-house. They walked silently through the woods. After some time she acquired fortitude enough to speak of her father, and to give a brief account of the manner of his death. Emily learned that, after they had parted, he had wandered for some time along the shores of the Mediterranean, and had then returned through Languedoc into Gascony, which was his native province, and where he usually resided.

When he had concluded his little narrative, he sunk into a silence which Emily was not disposed to interrupt, and it continued till they reached the gate of the château, when he stopped, as if he had known this to be the limit of his walk. Here, saying that it was his intention to return to Estuvière on the following day, he asked her if she would permit him to take leave of her in the morning; and Emily, perceiving that she could not reject an ordinary civility without expressing by her refusal an expectation of something more, was compelled to answer that she would be at home.

She passed a melancholy evening, during which the retrospect

of all that had happened since she had seen Valancourt would rise to her imagination. She remembered particularly the earnest and solemn manner in which her father had required her to destroy the manuscript papers; and awakened from the lethargy in which sorrow had held her, she was shocked to think she had not yet obeyed him, and determined that another day should not reproach her with the neglect.

On the next morning Emily ordered a fire to be lighted in the stove of the chamber where St. Aubert used to sleep, and as soon as she had breakfasted went thither to burn the papers. Having fastened the door to prevent interruption, she opened the closet where they were concealed; as she entered which she felt an emotion of unusual awe, and stood for some moments surveying it, trembling and almost afraid to remove the board. There was a great chair in one corner of the closet, and opposite to it stood the table at which she had seen her father sit, on the evening that preceded his departure, looking over, with so much emotion, what she believed to be these very papers.

By the directions which St. Aubert had given her, she readily found the board he had described, in an opposite corner of the closet, near the window. She distinguished also the line he had mentioned; and pressing it, as he had bade her, it slid down and disclosed the bundle of papers, together with some scattered ones and the purse of louis. With a trembling hand she removed them—replaced the board—paused a moment—and was rising from the floor, when, on looking up, there appeared to her alarmed fancy a countenance in the chair. The illusion (another instance of the unhappy effect which solitude and grief had gradually produced upon her mind) subdued her spirits. She rushed forward into the chamber, and sunk almost senseless into a chair.

Returning reason soon overcame the dreadful, but pitiable, attack of imagination, and she turned to the papers, though still with so little recollection, that her eyes involuntarily settled on the writing of some loose sheets which lay open; and she was unconscious that she was transgressing her father's strict injunction, till a sentence of dreadful import awakened her

attention and her memory together. She hastily put the papers from her; but the words which had roused equally her curiosity and terror, she could not dismiss from her thoughts. So powerfully had they affected her, that she even could not resolve to destroy the papers immediately; but the delusion was momentary.

Reanimated with a sense of her duty, she completed the triumph of her integrity over temptation, more forcible than any she had ever known, and consigned the papers to the flames. Her eyes watched them as they slowly consumed: she shuddered at the recollection of the sentence she had just seen, and at the certainty that the only opportunity of explaining it was then passing away for ever.

It was long after this that she recollected the purse; and as she was depositing it, unopened, in a cabinet, perceiving that it contained something of a size larger than coin, she examined it. At the bottom of the purse was a small packet; which having taken out, and unfolded paper after paper, she found to be an ivory case containing the miniature of a—lady ! She started. "The same," said she, "my father wept over !" On examining the countenance, she could recollect no person that it resembled: it was of uncommon beauty; and was characterized by an expression of sweetness shaded with sorrow and tempered by resignation.

St. Aubert had given no directions concerning this picture, nor had even named it; she therefore thought herself justified in preserving it. More than once remembering his manner when he had spoken of the Marchioness of Villeroi, she felt inclined to believe that this was her resemblance; yet there appeared no reason why he should have preserved a picture of that lady, or having preserved it, why he should lament over it in a manner so striking and affecting as she had witnessed on the night preceding his departure.

Emily still gazed on the countenance, examining its features; but she knew not where to detect the charm that captivated her attention, and inspired sentiments of such love and pity. Dark brown hair played carelessly along the open forehead;

the nose was rather inclined to aquiline; the lips spoke in a smile, but it was a melancholy one; the eyes were blue, and were directed upwards, with an expression of peculiar meekness; while the soft cloud of the brow spoke of the fine sensibility of the temper.

Emily was roused from the musing mood into which the picture had thrown her, by the closing of the garden gate; and on turning her eyes to the window she saw Valancourt coming towards the château. Her spirits agitated by the subjects that had lately occupied her mind, she felt unprepared to see him, and remained a few moments in the chamber to recover herself.

When she met him in the parlour, she was struck with the change that appeared in his air and countenance since they had parted at Roussillon, which twilight, and the distress she suffered on the preceding evening, had prevented her from observing. But dejection and languor disappeared for a moment, in the smile that now enlightened his countenance on perceiving her. "You see," said he, "I have availed myself of the permission with which you honoured me—of bidding *you* farewell, whom I had the happiness of meeting only yesterday."

Emily smiled faintly, and, anxious to say something, asked if he had been long in Gascony.

"A few days only," replied Valancourt, while a blush passed over his cheek. "I engaged in a long ramble after I had the misfortune of parting with the friends who had made my wanderings among the Pyrenees so delightful."

They walked down to the terrace, where Valancourt was charmed with the river scenery, and the views over the opposite shores of Guienne.

Emily and Valancourt talked of the scenes they had passed among the Pyrenean Alps; as he spoke of which there was often a tremulous tenderness in his voice; and sometimes he expatiated on them with all the fire of genius—sometimes would appear scarcely conscious of the topic, though he continued to speak.

At length he said with a hesitating voice, "This lovely scene I am going to leave !—to leave you— perhaps for ever ! These

moments may never return ! I cannot resolve to neglect, though I scarcely dare to avail myself of them. Let me, however, without offending the delicacy of your sorrow, venture to declare the admiration I must always feel of your goodness—oh ! that at some future period I might be permitted to call it love !"

Emily made an effort to overcome the confusion of her thoughts and to speak. At length she acquired courage to say, that she must think herself honoured by the good opinion of any person whom her father had esteemed.

He pressed her hand to his lips; it was cold and trembling; and raising her eyes, he saw the paleness of her countenance.

"You know not," said he, "the many anxious hours I have passed near you lately, when you believed me, if indeed you honoured me with a thought, far away. I have wandered near the château, in the still hours of the night, when no eye could observe me. It was delightful to know I was so near you; and there was something particularly soothing in the thought that I watched round your habitation while you slept. These grounds are not entirely new to me. Once I ventured within the fence, and spent one of the happiest and yet most melancholy hours of my life, in walking under what I believed to be your window."

Emily inquired how long Valancourt had been in the neighbourhood.

"Several days," he replied. "It was my design to avail myself of the permission M. St. Aubert had given me. I scarcely know how to account for it; but, although I anxiously wished to do this, my resolution always failed when the moment approached, and I constantly deferred my visit. I lodged in a village at some distance, and wandered with my dogs among the scenes of this charming country, wishing continually to meet you, yet not daring to visit you."

Having thus continued to converse without perceiving the flight of time, Valancourt at length seemed to recollect himself.

"I must go," said he mournfully; "but it is with the hope of seeing you again, of being permitted to pay my respects to

our family:—let me hear this hope confirmed by your voice."

"My family will be happy to see any friend of my dear ather," said Emily.

Valancourt kissed her hand, and still lingered, unable to epart, while Emily sat silently, with her eyes bent on the round; and Valancourt, as he gazed on her, considered that would soon be impossible for him to recall, even in his emory, the exact resemblance of the beautiful countenance e then beheld. At this moment a hasty footstep approached rom behind the plane-tree, and turning her eyes, Emily saw Iadame Cheron. She felt a blush steal upon her cheek, and er frame trembled with the emotion of her mind; but she nstantly rose to meet her visitor.

"So, niece!" said Madame Cheron, casting a look of surprise nd inquiry on Valancourt—"So, niece! how do you do?—ut I need not ask—your looks tell me you have already ecovered your loss."

"My looks do me injustice then, madame; my loss, I know, an never be recovered."

"Well, well! I will not argue with you: I see you have xactly your father's disposition; and let me tell you, it would ave been much happier for him, poor man! if it had been a ifferent one."

A look of dignified displeasure, with which Emily regarded Iadame Cheron while she spoke, would have touched almost ny other heart: she made no other reply; but introduced Valancourt, who could scarcely stifle the resentment he felt, nd whose bow Madame Cheron returned with a slight curtsy nd a look of supercilious examination. After a few moments e took leave of Emily, in a manner that hastily expressed is pain, both at his own departure and at leaving her to the ociety of Madame Cheron.

"Who is that young man?" said her aunt, in an accent vhich equally implied inquisitiveness and censure; "some idle dmirer of yours, I suppose? But I believed, niece, you had a reater sense of propriety than to have received the visits of ny young man in your present unfriended situation. Let me

tell you, the world will observe those things; and it will talk —ay, and very freely too."

Emily, extremely shocked at this coarse speech, attempted to interrupt it; but Madame Cheron would proceed, with all the self-importance of a person to whom power is new.

"I am now come to take you with me to Toulouse. I am sorry to find that your poor father died, after all, in such indifferent circumstances: however, I shall take you home with me. Ah ! poor man ! he was always more generous than provident, or he would not have left his daughter dependent on his relations."

"Nor has he done so, I hope, madame," said Emily calmly "nor did his pecuniary misfortunes arise from that noble generosity which always distinguished him: the affairs of M. de Motteville may, I trust, yet be settled without deeply injuring his creditors, and in the meantime I should be very happy to remain at La Vallée."

"And who is this young adventurer, pray ?" said Madame Cheron, "and what are his pretensions ?"

"These he must himself explain, madame," replied Emily "Of his family my father was not ignorant, and I believe it is unexceptionable."

She then proceeded to mention what she knew concerning it

"Oh, then, this it seems is a younger brother !" exclaimed her aunt, "and of course a beggar. A very fine tale, indeed And so my brother took a fancy to this young man after only a few days' acquaintance ? But that was so like him !"

Emily, desirous of concluding the conversation, inquired if her aunt would accept some refreshment; and Madame Cheron accompanied her to the château.

On entering the château, Madame Cheron expressed a desire that she would put up what she thought necessary to take to Toulouse, as she meant to set off immediately. Emily now tried to persuade her to defer the journey at least till the next day; and at length, with much difficulty, prevailed.

CHAPTER VI

t an early hour the carriage which was to take Emily and adame Cheron to Toulouse appeared at the door of the âteau. Old Theresa stood at the door to take leave of her ung lady. "God for ever keep you, ma'amselle!" said she; ile Emily gave her hand in silence, and could answer only th a pressure of her hand and a forced smile.

Valancourt, meanwhile, was returned to Estuvière, his heart cupied with the image of Emily. He was the younger son of ancient family of Gascony; and having lost his parents at early period of his life, the care of his education and of his all portion had devolved to his brother the Count de Duvar- y, his senior by nearly twenty years. Valancourt had been ucated in all the accomplishments of his age, and had an dour of spirit and a certain grandeur of mind, that gave n particular excellence in the exercises then thought heroic. is little fortune had been diminished by the necessary expenses his education; but M. La Valancourt the elder seemed to ink that his genius and accomplishments would amply supply e deficiency of his inheritance. They offered flattering hopes promotion in the military profession— in those times almost e only one in which a gentleman could engage without incur- ng a stain on his name; and La Valancourt was of course rolled in the army.

Meanwhile the travellers pursued their journey; Emily aking frequent efforts to appear cheerful, and too often apsing into silence and dejection.

At length her aunt's unpleasant lectures were interrupted by e arrival of the travellers at Toulouse; and Emily, who had t been there for many years, and had only a very faint recol- ction of it, was surprised at the ostentatious style exhibited in r aunt's house and furniture; the more so, perhaps, because was so totally different from the modest elegance to which e had been accustomed. She followed Madame Cheron rough a large hall, where several servants in rich liveries peared, to a kind of saloon fitted up with more show than

taste; and her aunt, complaining of fatigue, ordered supper immediately.

Madame Cheron's house stood at a little distance from the city of Toulouse, and was surrounded by extensive gardens, in which Emily, who had risen early, the next day, amused herself with wandering before breakfast. From a terrace, that extended along the highest part of them, was a wide view over Languedoc. On the distant horizon to the south she discovered the wild summits of the Pyrenees, and her fancy immediately painted the green pastures of Gascony at their feet.

"Whither have you been rambling so early?" said Madame Cheron, as her niece entered the breakfast-room; "I don't approve of these solitary walks."

And Emily was surprised, when, having informed her aunt that she had been no farther than the gardens, she understood these to be included in the reproof.

"I desire you will not walk there again, at so early an hour, unattended," said Madame Cheron: "my gardens are very extensive; and a young woman who can make assignations by moonlight at La Vallée, is not to be trusted to her own inclinations elsewhere."

Emily, extremely surprised and shocked, had scarcely power to beg an explanation of these words; and when she did, her aunt absolutely refused to give it; who now, passing from one painful topic only to revive another almost equally so, spoke of the situation of her niece's property in the hands of M. Motteville. While she thus talked with ostentatious pity of Emily's misfortunes, she failed not to inculcate the duties of humility and gratitude, or to render Emily fully sensible of every cruel mortification: who soon perceived that she was to be considered as a dependant, not only by her aunt, but by her aunt's servants.

She was now informed that a large party were expected to dinner. Her aunt then proceeded to examine the simplicity of her dress, adding, that she expected to see her attired with gaiety and taste. After which she condescended to show Emily the splendour of her château, and to point out the particular beauty

r elegance which she thought distinguished each of her umerous suites of apartments.

When the company arrived, Emily entered the saloon with n air of timidity which all her efforts could not overcome, nd which was increased by the consciousness of Madame heron's severe observation. Her mourning dress, the mild ejection of her beautiful countenance, and the retiring iffidence of her manner, rendered her a very interesting bject to many of the company; among whom she distinguished ignor Montoni and his friend Cavigni, the late visitors at M. Quesnel's; who now seemed to converse with Madame heron with the familiarity of old acquaintance, and she to ttend to them with particular pleasure.

This Signor Montoni had an air of conscious superiority, nimated by spirit and strengthened by talents, to which every erson seemed involuntarily to yield. His visage was long, and ather narrow; yet he was called handsome: and it was, perhaps, he spirit and vigour of his soul, sparkling through his features, hat triumphed for him. Emily felt admiration, but not the dmiration that leads to esteem; for it was mixed with a degree f fear she knew not exactly wherefore.

Cavigni was gay and insinuating as formerly; and though e paid almost incessant attention to Madame Cheron, he ound some opportunities of conversing with Emily, to whom e directed at first the sallies of his wit, but now and then ssumed an air of tenderness, which she observed and shrunk rom.

This day passed without any material occurrence; and Emily, hough amused by the characters she had seen, was glad when he could retire to the recollections which had acquired with er the character of duties.

A fortnight passed in a round of dissipation and company; nd Emily who attended Madame Cheron in all her visits, was ometimes entertained, but oftener wearied.

Emily's pleasantest hours were passed in the pavilion of the errace; to which she retired, when she could steal from obser-

vation, with a book to overcome, or a lute to indulge her melancholy.

One evening, having excused herself from accompanying her aunt abroad, she thus withdrew to the pavilion, with books and her lute. It was the mild and beautiful evening of a sultry day; and the windows, which fronted the west, opened upon all the glory of a setting sun.

She was awakened from her musing by the sound of horses' feet along a road that wound under the window of the pavilion; and a gentleman passed on horseback, whose resemblance to Valancourt, in air and figure (for the twilight did not permit a view of his features), immediately struck her. She retired hastily from the lattice, fearing to be seen, yet wishing to observe further; while the stranger passed on without looking up; and when she returned to the lattice, she saw him faintly through the twilight, winding under the high trees that led to Toulouse.

On the following morning she was summoned to Madame Cheron, whose countenance was inflamed with resentment; and as Emily advanced, she held out a letter to her.

"Do you know this hand ?" said she, in a severe tone, and with a look that was intended to search her heart; while Emily examined the letter attentively, and assured her that she did not.

"Do not provoke me," said her aunt: "you do know it: confess the truth immediately. I insist upon your confessing the truth instantly."

Emily was silent and turned to leave the room; but Madame called her back.

"I called you here," resumed her aunt, colouring, "to tell you that I will not be disturbed, in my own house, by any letters or visits from young men who may take a fancy to flatter you. This M. de Valantine—I think you call him—has the impertinence to beg I will permit him to pay his respects to me ! I shall send him a proper answer. And for you, Emily, I repeat it once for all—if you are not contented to conform to my directions and to my way of life, I shall give up the

task of overlooking your conduct—I shall no longer trouble myself with your education, but shall send you to board in a convent."

"Dear madame," said Emily, overcome by the rude suspicions her aunt had expressed, "how have I deserved these reproofs ?" She could say no more; and so very fearful was she of acting with any degree of impropriety in the affair itself, that, at the present moment, Madame Cheron might perhaps have prevailed with her to bind herself by a promise to renounce Valancourt for ever.

"Well, then," said she, "promise me that you will neither see this young man, nor write to him, without my consent."

Emily readily gave it; and being then suffered to withdraw, she walked into the garden: tried to compose her spirits; and at length arrived at her favourite pavilion at the end of the terrace. She endeavoured to review with exactness all the particulars of her conversation with Valancourt at La Vallée. As she repeated the words—"should we ever meet again !" she shrunk, as if this was a circumstance which had never before occurred to her, and tears came to her eyes; which she hastily dried, for she heard footsteps approaching, and then the door of the pavilion open, and, on turning, she saw—Valancourt.

An emotion of mingled pleasure, surprise, and apprehension pressed so suddenly upon her heart as almost to overcome her spirits. After some short and embarrassed conversation, she led him into the gardens, and inquired if he had seen Madame Cheron. "No," said he, "I have not yet seen her, for they told me she was engaged; and as soon as I learned that you were in the gardens I came hither." Emily, who knew not what to reply, was spared from further perplexity, and was sensible only of fear, when on raising her eyes, she saw Madame Cheron turn into the avenue. As the consciousness of innocence returned this fear was so far dissipated as to permit her to appear tranquil; and instead of avoiding her aunt, she advanced with Valancourt to meet her. Having mentioned Valancourt's name, she became again too much agitated to remain with them, and returned into the château; where she awaited long

in a state of trembling anxiety the conclusion of the conference.

Madame Cheron had a long conversation with Valancourt; and when she returned to the château, her countenance expressed ill-humour, but not the degree of severity which Emily had apprehended. "I have dismissed this young man at last," said she; "and I hope my house will never again be disturbed with similar visits. He assures me that your interview was not preconcerted."

Madame Cheron pursued her triumph: "He has also thought proper to tell me, that he will receive his dismission from no person but yourself. This favour, however, I have absolutely refused him: he shall learn, that it is quite sufficient that I disapprove him. And I take this opportunity of repeating,—that, if you concert any means of interview unknown to me, you shall leave my house immediately."

"How little do you know me, madame, that you should think such an injunction necessary!" said Emily, trying to suppress her emotion; "how little of the dear parents who educated me!"

Madame Cheron now went to dress for an engagement which she had made for the evening; and Emily passed the time in weeping, which, according to her aunt's direction, she ought to have employed in dressing. This important duty was, however, quickly dispatched; though, when she joined Madame Cheron at table, her eyes betrayed that she had been in tears, and drew upon her a severe reproof.

Her efforts to appear cheerful did not entirely fail, when she joined the company at the house of Madame Clairval, an elderly widow lady, who had lately come to reside at Toulouse on an estate of her late husband. She had lived many years at Paris in a splendid style; had naturally a gay temper; and, since her residence at Toulouse, had given some of the most magnificent entertainments that had been seen in that neighbourhood.

These excited not only the envy, but the trifling ambition of Madame Cheron, who, since she could not rival the splendour of her festivities, was desirous of being ranked in the number of her most intimate friends.

The entertainments of this evening consisted of a ball and upper; it was a fancy ball: and the company danced in roups in the gardens, which were very extensive. Emily urveyed the gaiety of the scene with a melancholy kind of leasure; and her emotion may be imagined, when, as she stood vith her aunt looking at one of the groups, she perceived Valancourt—saw him dancing with a young and beautiful ady—saw him conversing with her with a mixture of attention nd familiarity such as she had seldom observed in his manner. he turned hastily from the scene, and attempted to draw away Madame Cheron, who was conversing with Cavigni; and the Count Bauvillers, who had addressed Emily, made some obser- ations upon the scene, to which she answered almost un- onsciously; for her mind was still occupied with the idea of Valancourt, to whom it was with extreme uneasiness that she emained so near. Some remarks, however, which the count nade upon the dance, obliged her to turn her eyes towards it, nd at that moment Valancourt's met hers. Her colour faded gain; and instantly averted her looks, but not before she had bserved the altered countenance of Valancourt on perceiving ier.

Emily perceiving that Valancourt was coming towards her, ose and joined Madame Cheron.

"Here is the Chevalier Valancourt, madame," said she in a vhisper, "pray let us go." Her aunt immediately moved on, ut not before Valancourt had reached them; who bowed owly to Madame Cheron, and with an earnest and dejected ook to Emily; with whom, notwithstanding all her effort, an ir of more than common reserve prevailed. The presence of Madame Cheron prevented Valancourt from remaining, and e passed on with a countenance, whose melancholy reproached ier for having increased it.

Valancourt rejected of her aunt, and Valancourt dancing with gay and beautiful partner, alternately tormented her mind. As he passed along the gardens, she looked timidly forward, half earing and half hoping that he might appear in the crowd;

and the disappointment she felt on not seeing him, told her that she had hoped more than she had feared.

Montoni soon after joined the party. He muttered over some short speech about regret for having been so long detained elsewhere, when he knew he should have the pleasure of seeing Madame Cheron here: and she, receiving the apology with the air of a pettish girl, addressed herself entirely to Cavigni.

The supper was served in different pavilions in the gardens, as well as in one large saloon of the château, and with more of taste than either of splendour or even of plenty. Madame Cheron and her party supped with Madame Clairval in the saloon; and Emily with difficulty disguised her emotion when she saw Valancourt placed at the same table with herself. There Madame Cheron, having surveyed him with high displeasure, said to some person who sat next to her, "Pray, who *is* that young man ?"

"It is the Chevalier Valancourt," was the answer.

"Yes; I am not ignorant of his name; but who is this Chevalier Valancourt, that thus intrudes himself at this table ?"

"Oh, the Chevalier Valancourt is one of the most accomplished young men we have," replied the lady to whom this remark was addressed. "It is whispered that Mademoiselle d'Emery and her large fortune are to be his."

"Impossible !" exclaimed Madame Cheron, reddening with vexation; "it is impossible that she can be so destitute of taste; he has so little the air of a person of condition, that, if I did not see him at the table of Madame Clairval, I should never have suspected him to be one. I have, besides, particular reasons for believing the report to be erroneous."

"I cannot doubt the truth of it," replied the lady gravely, disgusted by the abrupt contradiction she had received concerning her opinion of Valancourt's merit.

"You will not, perhaps, doubt it," said Madame Cheron, "when I assure you that it was only this morning that I rejected his suit."

" I perceive you do not know," said the lady, "that the gen-

leman you have been speaking of is Madame Clairval's nephew !"

"Impossible !" exclaimed Madame Cheron; who now began o perceive that she had been totally mistaken in her judgment of Valancourt, and to praise him aloud, with as much servility s she had before censured him with frivolous malignity.

Emily, who during the greater part of this conversation had been so absorbed in thought as to be spared the pain of hearing t, was extremely surprised by her aunt's praise of Valancourt, with whose relationship to Madame Clairval she was unacquainted, but she was not sorry when Madame Cheron prepared to withdraw, immediately after supper. Montoni then came to hand Madame Cheron to her carriage.

On the following morning, as Emily sat at breakfast with her aunt, a letter was brought to her, of which she knew the handwriting upon the cover; and as she received it with a trembling hand, Madame Cheron hastily inquired from whom it came. Emily, with her leave, broke the seal, and observing the signature of Valancourt, gave it, unread, to her aunt, who received it with impatience; and as she looked it over, Emily endeavoured to read on her countenance its contents. Having returned the letter to her niece, whose eyes asked if she might examine it, "Yes, read it, child," said Madame Cheron in a manner less severe than she had expected; and Emily had, perhaps, never before so willingly obeyed her aunt. In this letter Valancourt said little of the interview of the preceding day, but concluded with declaring that he would accept his dismission from Emily only, and with entreating that she would allow him to wait upon her on the approaching evening. When she read this she was astonished at the moderation of Madame Cheron, and looked at her with expectation as she said sorrowfully: "What am I to say, madame ?"

"Why—we must see the young man, I believe," replied her aunt, "and hear what he has further to say for himself. You may tell him he may come." Emily dared scarcely credit what she heard. "Yet stay," added Madame Cheron; "I will tell him so myself."

What were the particulars of her aunt's note Emily did not learn, but the result was a visit from Valancourt in the evening; whom Madame Cheron received alone; and they had a long conversation before Emily was called down. When she entered the room, her aunt was conversing with complacency, and she saw the eyes of Valancourt, as she impatiently rose, animated with hope.

"We have been talking over this affair," said Madame Cheron. "The chevalier has been telling me, that the late Monsieur Clairval was the brother of the Countess de Duvarney, his mother. I only wish he had mentioned his relationship to Madame Clairval before: I certainly should have considered that circumstance as a sufficient introduction to my house." Valancourt bowed, and was going to address Emily, but her aunt prevented him. "I have, therefore, consented that you shall receive his visit; and though I will not bind myself to any promise or say that I shall consider him as my nephew, yet I shall permit the intercourse, and shall look forward to any further connexion as an event which may possibly take place in a course of years, provided the chevalier rises in his profession, or any circumstance occurs which may make it prudent for him to take a wife. But M. Valancourt will observe, and you too, Emily, that, till that happens, I positively forbid any thoughts of marrying."

As she said this, she rose and quitted the room, leaving Emily and Valancourt in a state of mutual embarrassment; and when Valancourt's hopes enabled him to overcome his fears, and to address her with the zeal and sincerity so natural to him, it was a considerable time before she was sufficiently recovered to hear with distinctness the solicitations and inquiries.

From this period Valancourt made frequent visits to Madame Cheron, and Emily passed in his society the happiest hours she had known since the death of her father.

Montoni was now also become a daily guest at the château, and Emily was compelled to observe that he really was a suitor, and a favoured suitor, to her aunt.

Thus passed the winter months, not only in peace, but in

appiness, to Valancourt and Emily; the station of his regiment eing so near Toulouse as to allow this frequent intercourse.

CHAPTER VII

Emily observed with concern the ascendancy which Montoni ad acquired over Madame Cheron, as well as the increasing requency of his visits; and her own opinion of this Italian vas confirmed by that of Valancourt, who had always expressed a dislike of him. As she was one morning sitting at work in the pavilion, enjoying the pleasant freshness of spring, he received a summons to attend Madame Cheron immediately, nd had scarcely entered the dressing-room, when she observed vith surprise the dejection of her aunt's countenance, and the ontrasted gaiety of her dress. "So, niece!" said madame, and he stopped under some degree of embarrassment—"I sent for ou; I —I wished to see you: I have news to tell you: from his hour you must consider the Signor Montoni as your uncle —we were married this morning."

Emily made a feeble attempt to congratulate her on these pparently imprudent nuptials. "I shall now celebrate my narriage with some splendour," continued Madame Montoni. I also wish you to inform Monsieur Valancourt that I have hanged my name; and he will acquaint Madame Clairval. In few days I shall give a grand entertainment at which I shall equest their presence."

Emily was so lost in surprise and various thought, that she nade Madame Montoni scarcely any reply; but, at her desire, he returned to inform Valancourt of what had passed.

Montoni now took possession of the château, and the comnand of its inhabitants, with the ease of a man who had long onsidered it to be his own. His friend, Cavigni had apartments ssigned to him, and received from the domestics an equal egree of obedience with the master of the mansion.

Within a few days, Madame Montoni, as she had promised, ave a magnificent entertainment to a very numerous comany, among them was Valancourt, but at which Madame

Clairval excused herself from attending. There was a concert, ball, and supper. Valancourt was of course Emily's partner.

A few weeks only had elapsed since the marriage, when Madame Montoni informed Emily that the signor intended to return to Italy as soon as the necessary preparation could be made for so long a journey. "We shall go to Venice," said she, "where the signor has a fine mansion, and from thence to his estate in Tuscany. Why do you look so grave, child? You, who are so fond of a romantic country and fine views, will doubtless be delighted with this journey."

"Am I then to be of the party, madame?" said Emily with extreme surprise and emotion.

"Most certainly," replied her aunt: "how could you imagine we should leave you behind? But I see you are thinking of the chevalier: he is not yet, I believe, informed of the journey; but he very soon will be so: Signor Montoni is gone to acquaint Madame Clairval of our journey, and to say that the proposed connexion between the families must be thought of no more."

The unfeeling manner in which Madame Montoni thus informed her niece that she must be separated, perhaps for ever, from the man with whom she was on the point of being united for life, added to the dismay which she must otherwise have suffered at such intelligence. When she could speak, she asked the cause of the sudden change in madame's sentiments towards Valancourt; but the only reply she could obtain was, that the signor had forbade the connexion, considering it to be greatly inferior to what Emily might reasonably expect.

Emily was, at this time, too much affected to employ either remonstrance or entreaty on this topic.

As she crossed the hall, a person entered it by the great door, whom, as her eyes hastily glanced that way, she imagined to be Montoni; and she was passing on with quicker steps when she heard the well-known voice of Valancourt.

"Emily, O my Emily!" cried he in a tone faltering with impatience, while she turned, and, as he advanced, was alarmed at the expression of his countenance and the eager desperation of his air. "In tears, Emily!—I would speak with you," said

; "I have much to say: conduct me to where we may nverse.—But you tremble—you are ill! Let me lead you a seat."

He observed the open door of an apartment, and hastily ok her hand to lead her thither; but she attempted to with-aw it, and said, with a languid smile, "I am better already; if u wish to see my aunt she is in the dining-parlour."—"I must eak with *you*, my Emily," replied Valancourt. "Good God! is already come to this?—Are you indeed so willing to resign e?"

The despondency with which he spoke this affected her most to tears; but she persisted in refusing to hear him till had conversed with Madame Montoni. "Where is her hus-nd? where, then, is Montoni?" said Valancourt in an altered ne: "it is he to whom I must speak."

Emily, terrified for the consequence of the indignation that ashed in his eyes, tremblingly assured him that Montoni was ot at home, and entreated he would endeavour to moderate s resentment.

He listened to her entreaties with attention, but replied to em only with looks of despondency and tenderness; con-aling as much as possible the sentiments he felt toward Mon-ni, that he might soothe the apprehensions which distressed r. But she saw the veil he had spread over his resentment; d his assumed tranquillity only alarming her more, she urged length the impolicy of forcing an interview with Montoni, d of taking any measure which might render their separation remediable. Valancourt yielded to these remonstrances: and r affecting entreaties drew from him a promise, that, how-er Montoni might persist in his design of disuniting them, would not seek to redress his wrongs by violence.

Valancourt was careful to do nothing that might unneces-rily irritate Montoni: he wrote to him, therefore, not to emand an interview, but to solicit one; and having done this, endeavoured to wait with calmness his reply.

Montoni, in his reply to Valancourt, said, that as an inter-ew could neither remove the objections of the one, nor over-

come the wishes of the other, it would serve only to produce useless altercation between them; he therefore thought proper to refuse it.

In consideration of the policy suggested by Emile, and of his promise to her, Valancourt restrained the impulse that urged him to the house of Montoni to demand what had been denied to his entreaties: he only repeated his solicitations to see him; seconding them with all the arguments his situation could suggest. Thus several days passed, in remonstrance on one side, and inflexible denial on the other. At length, Valancourt's letters were returned unopened; and then, in the first moments of passionate despair, he forgot every promise to Emily, except the solemn one which bound him to avoid violence, and hastened to Montoni's château, determined to see him by whatever other means might be necessary. Montoni was denied; and Valancourt, when he afterwards inquired for Madame and Ma'amselle St. Aubert, was absolutely refused admittance by the servants.

During this period of torturing suspense to Valancourt, Emily was sunk into that kind of stupor with which sudden and irremediable misfortune sometimes overwhelms the mind. The silence of Valancourt afflicted more than it surprised her, since she attributed it to its just occasion; but when the day preceding that on which she was to quit Toulouse arrived, and she had heard no mention of his being permitted to take leave of her, grief overcame every consideration that had made her reluctant to speak of him, and she inquired of Madame Montoni whether this consolation had been refused. Her aunt informed her that it had.

Emily, having turned away to hide her tears, quitted the room to indulge them; and the day was passed in an intensity of anguish, such as she had perhaps never known before. When she withdrew to her chamber for the night, she remained in the chair where she had placed herself on entering the room, absorbed in her grief, till long after every member of the family, except herself, was retired to rest.

Her mind was at length so much agitated by the consider-

on of her state, and the belief that she had seen Valancourt the last time, that she suddenly became very faint; and king round the chamber for something that might revive , she observed the casements, and had just strength to ow one open, near which she seated herself. The air recalled spirits, and the still moonlight, that fell upon the elms of a g avenue fronting the window, somewhat soothed them, and ermined her to try whether exercise and the open air would relieve the intense pain that bound her temples. In the teau all was still: and passing down the great staircase into hall, from whence a passage led immediately to the garden, softly and unheard, as she thought, unlocked the door, and ered the avenue. She moved on towards the terrace, which, ning along the upper garden, commanded the whole of the er one, and communicated with it by a flight of marble os that terminated the avenue.

Having reached these steps, she paused a moment to look nd; but she heard only the plaintive sweetness of the night- ale, with the light shiver of the leaves, and she pursued her y towards the pavilion; having reached which, its obscurity not prevent the emotion that a fuller view of its well- own scene would have excited.

Her tears were suddenly stopped by terror: a voice spoke r her in the pavilion—she shrieked: it spoke again; and distinguished the well-known tones of Valancourt. It was, eed, Valancourt who supported her in his arms! For some ments their emotion would not suffer either to speak. nily," said Valancourt at length, as he pressed her hand in "Emily!"—and he was again silent; but the accent in which had pronounced her name expressed all his tenderness and row.

Emily continued to weep, and was silent also; when Valan- rt proceeded to propose an immediate marriage, and that an early hour on the following morning she should quit dame's house, and be conducted by him to the church of Augustines, where a friar should await to unite them.

After a few minutes she drew a deep sigh, and began to

revive. The conflict she had suffered, between love and the duty she at present owed to her father's sister; her repugnance to a clandestine marriage, this was too powerful for a mind already enervated by sorrow.

With a candour that proved how truly she esteemed and loved him, and which endeared her to him, if possible, more than ever, she told Valancourt all her reasons for rejecting his proposals. Those which influenced her concerning his future welfare, he instantly refuted, or rather contradicted; but they awakened tender considerations for her, which the frenzy of passion and despair had concealed before; and love, which had but lately prompted him to propose a clandestine and immediate marriage induced him to renounce it. The triumph was almost too much for his heart; for Emily's sake, he endeavoured to stifle his grief; but the swelling anguish would not be restrained. —"O Emily!" said he, "I must leave you—I *must* leave you —and I know it is for ever!"

Convulsive sobs again interrupted his words, and they wept together in silence; till Emily, recollecting the danger of being discovered, and the impropriety of prolonging an interview which might subject her to censure summoned all her fortitude to utter a last farewell!

The carriages were at the gates at an early hour. The bustle of the domestics passing to and fro in the galleries awakened Emily from harassing slumbers.

The windows of her room opened upon the garden. As Emily passed them, she saw the spot where she had parted with Valancourt on the preceding night; the remembrance pressed heavily on her heart, and she turned hastily away from the object that had awakened it.

The baggage being at length adjusted, the travellers entered their carriages.

During several days the travellers journeyed over the plains of Languedoc; and then entering Dauphiny, and winding for some time among the mountains of that romantic province, they quitted their carriages and began to ascend the Alps.

But who may describe her rapture, when, having passed rough a sea of vapour, she caught a first view of Italy; when, om the ridge of one of those tremendous precipices that hang on Mount Cenis and guard the entrance of that enchanting untry, she looked down through the lower clouds, and, as ey floated away, saw the grassy vales of Piedmont at her et, and beyond, the plains of Lombardy extending to the rthest distance, at which appeared, on the faint horizon, the ubtful towers of Turin ?

CHAPTER VIII

It was some hours after sunset before they arrived at Verona, hose beautiful environs were therefore not seen by Emily till e following morning; when, leaving that pleasant town at n early hour, they set off for Padua, where they embarked n the Brenta for Venice.

Nothing could exceed Emily's admiration on her first view Venice, with its islets, palaces, and towers rising out of the a, whose clear surface reflected the tremulous picture in all s colours. The sun, sinking in the west, tinted the waves and e lofty mountains of Friuli, which skirt the northern shores the Adriatic, with a saffron glow, while on the marble rticoes and colonnades of St. Mark were thrown the rich ghts and shades of evening. As they glided on, the grander atures of this city appeared more distinctly: its terraces, owned with airy yet majestic fabrics, touched, as they now ere, with the splendour of the setting sun, appeared as if they ad been called up from the ocean by the wand of an enchanter, ther than reared by mortal hands.

The barge passed on to the Grand Canal, where Montoni's ansion was situated. And here, other forms of beauty and grandeur, such as her imagination had never painted, were nfolded to Emily in the palaces of Sansovino and Palladio, she glided along the waves. The air bore no sounds but ose of sweetness, echoing along each margin of the canal, and om gondolas on its surface, while groups of masks were seen

dancing on the moonlight terraces, and seemed almost to realize the romance of fairyland.

The barge stopped before the portico of a large house, from whence a servant of Montoni crossed the terrace, and immediately the party disembarked. From the portico they passed a noble hall to a staircase of marble, which led to a saloon fitted up in a style of magnificence that surprised Emily. The walls and ceilings were adorned with historical and allegorical paintings in fresco; silver tripods depending from chains of the same metal illumined the apartment, the floor of which was covered with Indian mats painted in a variety of colours and devices; the couches and drapery of the lattices were of pale green silk, embroidered and fringed with green and gold. Balcony lattices opened upon the Grand Canal, whence rose a confusion of voices and of musical instruments, and the breeze that gave freshness to the apartment.

Madame Montoni seemed to assume the air of a princess, but Montoni was restless and discontented, and did not even observe the civility of bidding her welcome to her home.

Soon after his arrival, he ordered his gondola, and, with Cavigni, went out to mingle in the scenes of the evening. Madame then became serious and thoughtful. Emily who was charmed with everything she saw, endeavoured to enliven her, but reflection had not, with Madame Montoni, subdued caprice and ill-humour;and her answers discovered so much of both, that Emily gave up the attempt of diverting her, and withdrew to a lattice, to amuse herself with the scene without, so new and so enchanting.

The first object that attracted her notice was a group of dancers on the terrace below, led by a guitar and some other instruments. The girl who struck the guitar, and another who flourished the tambourine, passed on in a dancing step, and with a light grace and gaiety of heart that would have subdued the Goddess of Spleen in her worst humour. After these came a group of fantastic figures, some dressed as *gondolieri*, others as minstrels, while others seemed to defy all description. They sung in parts, their voices accompanied by a few soft instru-

ents. At a little distance from the portico they stopped, and
nily distinguished the verses of Ariosto. They sung of the
ars of the Moors against Charlemagne, and then of the woes
Orlando: afterwards the measure changed, and the melan-
oly sweetness of Petrarch succeeded. The magic of his grief
as assisted by all that Italian expression, heightened by the
chantments of Venetian moonlight, could give.

After supper, her aunt sat late; but Montoni did not return,
nd she at length retired to rest. If Emily had admired the
agnificence of the saloon, she was not less surprised on observ-
g the half-furnished and forlorn appearance of the apart-
ents she passed in the way to her chamber, whither she went
rough long suites of noble rooms, that seemed, from their
solate aspect, to have been unoccupied for many years. On
e walls of some were the faded remains of tapestry; from
hers, painted in fresco, the damps had almost withdrawn
th colour and design. At length she reached her own chamber,
acious, desolate, and lofty, like the rest, with high lattices
at opened towards the Adriatic.

Montoni and his companions did not return home till many
urs after the dawn had blushed upon the Adriatic. Without
me object of strong interest, life was to him little more than
sleep; and when pursuits of real interest failed, he substituted
tificial ones, till habit changed their nature, and they ceased
be unreal. Of this kind was the habit of gaming which he
d adopted, first, for the purpose of relieving him from the
nguor of inaction, but had since pursued with the ardour
passion. In this occupation he had passed the night with
avigni, and a party of young men who had more money than
nk and more vice than either. Among these, however, were
me of superior abilities, and a few whom Montoni admitted
his intimacy; but even towards these he still preserved a
cisive and haughty air.

Among the few whom he distinguished were the Signors
rtolini, Orsino, and Verezzi. The first was a man of gay
mper, strong passions, dissipated and of unbounded extra-
gance, but generous, brave, and unsuspicious. Orsino was

reserved and haughty; loving power more than ostentation; of a cruel and suspicious temper; quick to feel an injury, and relentless in avenging it; cunning and unsearchable in contrivance, patient and indefatigable in the execution of his schemes. This man was the chief favourite of Montoni. Verezzi was a man of some talent, of fiery imagination, and the slave of alternate passions. He was gay, voluptuous, and daring, yet had neither perseverance nor true courage, and was meanly selfish in all his aims.

Such were the friends whom Montoni introduced to his family and his table, on the day after his arrival at Venice. There were also of the party a Venetian nobleman, Count Morano, and a Signora Livona, whom Montoni had introduced to his wife as a lady of distinguished merit, and who, having called in the morning to welcome her to Venice, had been requested to be of the dinner party.

Madame Montoni received with a very ill grace the compliments of the signors. She disliked them, because they were the friends of her husband; hated them, because she believed they had contributed to detain him abroad till so late an hour of the preceding morning. The rank of Count Morano procured him that distinction which she refused to the rest of the company.

In the cool of the evening the party embarked in Montoni's gondola, and rowed out upon the sea. The red glow of sunset still touched the waves, and lingered in the west, where the melancholy gleam seemed slowly expiring while the dark blue of the upper ether began to twinkle with stars. Emily sat, given up to pensive and sweet emotions.

The last strain of distant music now died in air, for the gondola was far upon the waves, and the party determined to have music of their own. The Count Morano, who sat next to Emily and who had been observing her for some time in silence, snatched up a lute, and struck the chords with the finger of harmony herself, while his voice, a fine tenor, accompanied them in a rondeau full of tender sadness.

Meanwhile Montoni, who was weary of this harmony, was

nsidering how he might disengage himself from his party, withdraw with such of it as would be willing to play, to a sino. In a pause of the music he proposed returning to shore; proposal which Orsino eagerly seconded, but which the unt and the other gentlemen as warmly opposed.

Montoni still meditated how he might excuse himself from nger attendance upon the count, for to him only he thought cuse necessary, and how he might get to land, till the *gondo-ri* of an empty boat returning to Venice hailed his people. ithout troubling himself longer about an excuse, he seized is opportunity of going thither; and committing the ladies to e care of his friends, departed with Orsino, while Emily, for e first time, saw him go with regret: for she considered his esence a protection, though she knew not what she should ar.

Meanwhile the count having secretly dispatched a servant Montoni's boat for his own gondola and musicians, Emily ard, without knowing his project, the gay song of *gondolieri* proaching, as they sat on the stern of the boat, and saw the emulous gleam of the moonlight wave, which their oars dis-rbed. Presently she heard the sound of instruments, and then full symphony swelled on the air; and the boats meeting, the *ndolieri* hailed each other. The count then explaining himself, e party removed into his gondola, which was embellished th all that taste could bestow.

While they partook of a collation of fruits and ice, the whole nd, following at a distance in the other boat, played the ost sweet and enchanting strains; and the count, who had ain seated himself by Emily, paid her unremitted attention; d sometimes, in a low but impassioned voice, uttered com-ments she could not misunderstand. To avoid them she nversed with Signora Livona, and her manner to the count umed a mild reserve, which, though dignified, was too gentle repress his assiduities; he could see, hear, speak to no person t Emily.

They landed at St. Mark's, where the gaiety of the colon-des and the beauty of the night made Madame Montoni

willingly submit to the count's solicitations to join the promenade, and afterwards to take a supper with the rest of the party at his casino.

It was very late before their gondola was ordered; and Emily's surprise was extreme, when, on quitting the casino, she beheld the broad sun rising out of the Adriatic, while St. Mark's Place was yet crowded with company. Sleep had long weighed heavily on her eyes; but now the fresh sea breeze revived her, and she would have quitted the scene with regret, had not the count been present, performing the duty which he had imposed upon himself, of escorting them home. There they heard that Montoni was not yet returned; and his wife, retiring in displeasure to her apartment, at length released Emily from the fatigue of further attendance.

Montoni came home late in the morning, in a very ill humour, having lost considerably at play; and before he withdrew to rest had a private conference with Cavigni, whose manner on the following day seemed to tell that the subject of it had not been pleasing to him.

Several weeks passed in the course of customary visits, during which nothing remarkable occurred. Emily was amused by the manners and scenes that surrounded her, so different from those of France, but where Count Morano, too frequently for her comfort, contrived to introduce himself.

Soon after his arrival at Venice, Montoni received a packet from M. Quesnel, in which the latter mentioned the death of his wife's uncle, at his villa on the Brenta; and that, in consequence of this event, he should hasten to take possession of that estate and of other effects bequeathed to him. This uncle was the brother of Madame Quesnel's late mother; Montoni was related to her by the father's side; and though he could have had neither claim not expectation concerning these possessions, he could scarcely conceal the envy which M. Quesnel's letter excited.

Emily had observed with concern, that, since they left France, Montoni had not even affected kindness towards her aunt, and that, after treating her at first with neglect, he now met her with uniform ill-humour and reserve. He had been deceived

n an affair wherein he meant to be the deceiver; outwitted by ne superior cunning of a woman whose understanding he espised, and to whom he had sacrificed his pride and his berty, without saving himself from the ruin which had im- ended over his head. Madame Montoni had contrived to have ne greatest part of what she really did possess settled upon erself: what remained, though it was totally inadequate both o her husband's expectations and to his necessity, he had con- erted into money, and brought with him to Venice, that he ight a little longer delude society, and make a last effort to egain the fortunes he had lost.

Madame Montoni still thought herself little less than a prin- ess, possessing a palace at Venice, and a castle among the Apennines. To the Castle di Udolpho, indeed, Mononi some- mes talked of going for a few weeks, to examine into its con- ition, and to receive some rents; for it appeared that he had ot been there for two years, and that during this period it had een inhabited only by an old servant, whom he called his teward.

But Count Morano did not long confine himself to silent ssiduities; he declared his passion to Emily, and made proposals o Montoni, who encouraged, though Emily rejected him.

He now passed the greater part of his time at Montoni's, ining there almost daily, and attending madame and Emily herever they went; and all this notwithstanding the uniform eserve of Emily, whose aunt seemed as anxious as Montoni o promote this marriage, and would never dispense with her ttendance at any assembly where the count proposed to be resent.

A second letter from M. Quesnel announced the arrival of imself and his lady at the Villa Miarenti; stated several cir- umstances of his good fortune respecting the affair that had rought him into Italy; and concluded with an earnest request o see Montoni, his wife and niece, at his new estate.

Emily received about the same period a much more interest- ng letter, and which soothed for a while every anxiety of her eart. Valancourt, hoping she might be still at Venice, had

trusted a letter to the ordinary post, that told of his health, and of his unceasing and anxious affection. He had lingered at Toulouse for some time after her departure, and had thence gone to his brother's château, which was in the neighbourhood of La Vallée. Having mentioned this, he added: "The vicinity to La Vallée has alone detained me thus long at Estuvière: I frequently ride thither early in the morning. I have renewed my acquaintance with the good old Theresa, who rejoiced to see me, that she might talk of you.

"I have just heard of a circumstance which entirely destroys all my fairy paradise of ideal delight, and which will reconcile me to the necessity of returning to my regiment.—La Vallée is let; I have reason to believe this is without your knowledge, from what Theresa told me this morning, and therefore I mention the circumstance.—She shed tears while she related that she was going to leave the service of her dear mistress."

It was a considerable time before her mind was sufficiently abstracted from Valancourt to feel the force of his intelligence concerning La Vallée. That M. Quesnel should let it, without even consulting her on the measure, both surprised and shocked her.

Emily determined to consider what could be done for Theresa, and to talk very explicitly to M. Quesnel on the subject. She determined also to inquire whether he had made any mention of her affairs in his letter to Montoni, who soon gave her the opportunity she sought, by desiring that she would attend him in his study. Montoni was alone.

"I have just been writing to M. Quesnel," said he, when Emily appeared, "in reply to the letter I received from him a few days ago, and I wished to talk to you upon a subject that occupied part of it."

"I also wished to speak with you on this topic, sir," said Emily.

"It is a subject of some interest to you, undoubtedly," rejoined Montoni, "and I think, you must see it in the light that I do; indeed it will not bear any other. I trust you will agree

with me, that any objection founded on sentiment, as they call it, ought to yield to circumstances of solid advantage."

"Granting this, sir," replied Emily modestly, "those of humanity ought surely to be attended to. But I fear it is now too late to deliberate upon this plan, and I must regret that it is no longer in my power to reject it."

"It is too late," said Montoni; "but since it is so, I am pleased to observe that you submit to reason and necessity without indulging useless complaint. I have not closed my letter, and you may add a few lines to inform your uncle of your acquiescence. You will soon see him, for it is my intention to take you, with Madame Montoni, in a few days, to Miarenti, and you can then talk over the affair."

On the following day Count Morano dined again at Montoni's. He was in an uncommon flow of spirits, and Emily thought there was somewhat of exultation in his manner of addressing her, which she had never observed before.

In the evening Madame Montoni and her party went out upon the sea, and as the count led Emily to his *zendaletto,* he carried her hand to his lips, and thanked her for the condescension she had shown him. Emily, in extreme surprise and displeasure, hastily withdrew her hand, and concluded that he had spoken ironically; but on reaching the steps of the terrace, and observing by the livery that it was the count's *zendaletto* which waited below, while the rest of the party, having arranged themselves in the gondolas, were moving on, she determined not to permit a separate conversation, and wishing him a good evening, returned to the portico. The count followed to expostulate and entreat; and Montoni, who then came out, rendered solicitation unnecessary, for without condescending to speak, he took her hand, and led her to the *zendaletto.* Emily was not silent; she entreated Montoni, in a low voice, to consider the impropriety of these circumstances, and that he would spare her the mortification of submitting to them; he, however, was inflexible.

"This caprice is intolerable," said he, "and shall not be indulged: there is no impropriety in the case."

She was somewhat relieved by observing that Montoni was to be of the party, who seated himself on one side of her, while Morano placed himself on the other. There was a pause for some moments as the *gondolieri* prepared their oars, and Emily trembled from the apprehension of the discourse that might follow this silence. At length she collected courage to break it herself in the hope of preventing fine speeches from Morano, and reproof from Montoni. To some trivial remark which she made the latter immediately returned a short and disobliging reply; but Morano immediately followed with a general observation, which he contrived to end with a particular compliment; and though Emily passed it without even the notice of a smile, he was not discouraged.

Her spirits revived, when she heard once more the voice of song and laughter resounding from the Grand Canal, and at length entered again between its stately piazzas. The *zendaletto* stopped at Montoni's mansion, and the count hastily led her into the hall, where Montoni took his arm, and said something in a low voice, on which Morano kissed the hand he held, notwithstanding Emily's effort to disengage it, and, wishing her a good evening, with an accent and look she could not misunderstand, returned to his *zendaletto* with Montoni.

During the few days that intervened between this conversation and the departure for Miarenti, Montoni did not once address himself to Emily. His looks sufficiently declared his resentment: but that he should forbear to renew a mention of the subject of it, exceedingly surprised her, who was no less astonished that, during three days, Count Morano neither visited Montoni nor was named by him.

Thus passed the time in vain conjecture and alternate hopes and fears, till the day arrived when Montoni was to set out for the villa of Miarenti, which, like the preceding ones, neither brought the count, nor the mention of him.

Montoni having determined not to leave Venice till towards evening, that he might avoid the heats, and catch the cold breezes of night, embarked about an hour before sunset, with his family, in a barge, for the Brenta. Emily sat alone near the

stern of the vessel, and, as it floated slowly on, watched the gay and lofty city lessening from her view, till its palaces seemed to sink in the distant waves, while its loftier towers and domes, illumined by the declining sun, appeared on the horizon, like those far-seen clouds which in more northern climes often linger on the western verge, and catch the last light of a summer's evening.

As Emily approached the shores of Italy she began to discriminate the rich features and varied colouring of the landscape —the purple hills, groves of orange, pine, and cypress, shading magnificent villas, and towns rising among vineyards and plantations. The noble Brenta, pouring its broad waves into the sea, now appeared; and when she reached its mouth, the barge stopped that the horses might be fastened which were now to tow it up the stream.

The barge stopped at a flight of marble steps, which led up the bank to a lawn. Lights appeared between some pillars beyond the portico. Montoni sent forward his servant, and then disembarked with his family. They found Monsieur and Madame Quesnel with a few friends, seated on sofas in the portico, enjoying the cool breeze of the night, and eating fruits and ices, while some of their servants at a little distance on the river's bank were performing a simple serenade.

CHAPTER IX

Emily seized the first opportunity of conversing alone with M. Quesnel concerning La Vallée. His answers to her inquiries were concise, and delivered with the air of a man who is conscious of possessing absolute power, and impatient of hearing it questioned. He declared that the disposal of the place was a necessary measure; and that she might consider herself indebted to his prudence for even the small income that remained for her. "But, however," he added, "when this Venetian count (I have forgot his name) marries you, your present disagreeable state of dependence will cease. As a relation to

you I rejoice in the circumstance, which is so fortunate for you, and, I may add, so unexpected by your friends."

For some moments Emily was chilled into silence by this speech; and when she attempted to undeceive him, he appeared to have some private reason for disbelieving her assertion, and for a considerable time persevered in accusing her of capricious conduct. Being at length, however, convinced that she really disliked Morano, and had positively rejected his suit, his resentment was extravagant, and he expressed it in terms equally pointed and inhuman; for secretly flattered by the prospect of a connexion with a nobleman whose title he had affected to forget, he was incapable of feeling pity for whatever sufferings of his niece might stand in the way of his ambition.

Emily saw at once in his manner all the difficulties that awaited her; and though no oppression could have power to make her renounce Valancourt for Morano, her fortitude now trembled at an encounter with the violent passions of her uncle.

She opposed his turbulence and indignation only by the mild dignity of a superior mind, but the gentle firmness of her conduct served to exasperate still more his resentment, since it compelled him to feel his own inferiority; and when he left her, he declared that, if she persisted in her folly, both himself and Montoni would abandon her to the contempt of the world.

In the cool of the evening the ladies took the *fresco* along the bank of the Brenta in Madame Quesnel's carriage.

It was moonlight before the party returned to the villa, where supper was spread in the airy hall which had so much enchanted Emily's fancy on the preceding night. The ladies seated themselves in the portico, till M. Quesnel, Montoni, and other gentlemen should join them at the table; and Emily endeavoured to resign herself to the tranquillity of the hour. Presently, a barge stopped at the steps that led into the gardens, and soon after she distinguished the voices of Montoni and Quesnel, and then that of Morano, who in the next moment appeared. His compliments she received in silence, and her cold air seemed at first to discompose him; but he soon recovered his usual gaiety of manner.

During her stay at this pleasant villa, Emily was thus endered miserable by the assiduities of Morano, together with ne cruelly exerted authority of M. Quesnel and Montoni, who, vith her aunt, seemed now more resolutely determined upon his marriage than they had even appeared to be at Venice. ut amidst the pressure of her own misfortunes, she did not orget those of poor Theresa, for whom she pleaded with ourageous tenderness to Quesnel, who promised, in slight and eneral terms, that she should not be forgotten.

Montoni, in a long conversation with M. Quesnel, arranged he plan to be pursued respecting Emily; and M. Quesnel pro- osed to be at Venice, as soon as he should be informed that he nuptials were concluded.

It was new to Emily to part with any person with whom he was connected without feeling of regret; the moment, owever, in which she took leave of Monsieur and Madame Quesnel was, perhaps, the only satisfactory one she had known n their presence.

Morano returned in Montoni's barge; and Emily, as she vatched her gradual approach to that magic city, saw at her ide the only person who occasioned her to view it with less han perfect delight. They arrived there about midnight when Emily was released from the presence of the count, who with Montoni went to a casino, and she was suffered to retire to ier own apartment.

On the following day Montoni, in a short conversation vhich he held with Emily, informed her that he would no onger be *trifled* with, and that, since her marriage with the ount would be so highly advantageous to her that folly only ould object to it, and folly of such extent as was incapable of onviction, it should be celebrated without further delay, and, f that was necessary, without her consent.

Emily inquired by what right he exerted this unlimited uthority over her.

"By what right!" cried Montoni with a malicious smile; by the right of my will; if you can elude that I will not inquire y what right you do so. I now remind you, for the last time,

that you are a stranger in a foreign country, and that it is your interest to make me your friend; you know the means: if you compel me to be your enemy—I will venture to tell you that the punishment shall exceed your expectation. You may know *I* am not to be trifled with."

Emily continued, for some time after Montoni had left her, in a state of despair, or rather stupefaction. In this situation Madame Montoni found her, at the sound of whose voice Emily looked up; and her aunt, somewhat softened by the expression of despair that fixed her countenance, spoke in a manner more kind than she had ever yet done. Emily's heart was touched; and after weeping for some time recovered sufficient composure to speak on the subject of her distress, and to endeavour to interest Madame Montoni in her behalf. But though the compassion of her aunt had been surprised, her ambition was not to be overcome, and her present object was to be the aunt of a countess. When her mind, however, had recovered from her first shock of this behaviour, she considered that it would be impossible for him to compel her alliance with Morano, if she persisted in refusing to repeat any part of the marriage ceremony; and she persevered in her resolution to await Montoni's threatened vengeance, rather than give herself for life to a man whom she must have despised for his present conduct had she never even loved Valancourt; yet she trembled at the revenge she thus resolved to brave.

An affair, however, soon after occurred, which somewhat called off Montoni's attention from Emily. The mysterious visits of Orsino were renewed with more frequency since the return of the former to Venice. There were others also besides Orsino admitted to these midnight councils, and among them Cavigni and Verezzi. Montoni became more reserved and austere in his manner than ever; and Emily, if her own interests had not made her regardless of his, might have perceived that something extraordinary was working in his mind.

One night, on which a council was not held, Orsino came in great agitation of spirits, and dispatched his confidential servant to Montoni, who was at a casino, desiring that he would

eturn home immediately; but charging the servant not to nention his name. Montoni obeyed the summons and, on neeting Orsino, was informed of the circumstances that oc-asioned his visit and his visible alarm, with some of which, nowever, he was already acquainted.

A Venetian nobleman who had on a late occasion provoked he hatred of Orsino, had been waylaid and poniarded by hired ssassins; and as the murdered person was of the first con-nexions, the Senate had taken up the affair. One of the assassins vas now apprehended, who had confessed that Orsino was nis employer in the atrocious deed; and the latter, informed of his danger, had now come to Montoni to consult on the neasures necessary to favour his escape. He knew that at this ime the officers of the police were upon the watch for him ll over the city; to leave it at present, therefore, was impracti-cable; and Montoni consented to secrete him for a few days till he vigilance of justice should relax, and then to assist him in quitting Venice. He knew the danger he himself incurred by permitting Orsino to remain in his house; but such was the nature of his obligations to this man, that he did not think it prudent to refuse him an asylum.

While Orsino remained concealed in his house, Montoni was unwilling to attract public observation by the nuptials of Count Morano; but this obstacle was in a few days overcome by the departure of his criminal visitor; and he then informed Emily that her marriage was to be celebrated on the following morning. To her repeated assurances that it should not take place, he replied by a malignant smile; and telling her that the count and a priest would be at his house early in the morning, he advised her no further to dare his resentment by opposition to his will and to her own interest.

Emily was recalled from a kind of slumber, into which she had at length sunk, by a quick knocking at her chamber; she started up in terror. Montoni and Count Morano instantly came to her mind; but having listened in silence for some time, and recognizing the voice of Annette, her aunt's woman, she

ventured to open the door. "What brings you hither so early ?" said Emily, trembling excessively.

"Dear ma'amselle !" said Annette, "do not look so pale. I am quite frightened to see you. Here is a fine bustle below stairs, all the servants running to and fro, and none of them fast enough ! Here is a bustle indeed all of a sudden, and nobody knows for what !"

"Who is below besides them ?" said Emily: "Annette, do not trifle with me."

"Not for the world, ma'amselle, I would not trifle for the world; but one cannot help making one's remarks: and there is the signor in such a bustle as I never saw him before; and he has sent me to tell you, ma'am, to get ready immediately."

"Good God, support me !" cried Emily, almost fainting: "Count Morano is below, then !"

"No, ma'amselle, he is not below that I know of," replied Annette; "only his *Excellenza* sent me to desire you would get ready directly to leave Venice, for that the gondolas would be at the steps of the canal in a few minutes; but I must hurry back to my lady, who is just at her wits' end, and knows no which way to turn for haste."

"Explain, Annette, explain the meaning of all this before you go," said Emily.

"Nay, ma'amselle, that is more than I can do. I only know that the signor is just come home in a very ill humour; that he has had us all called out of our beds, and tells us we are all to leave Venice immediately."

"Is Count Morano to go with the signor ?" said Emily; "and whither are we going ?"

"I know neither, ma'am, for certain; but I heard Ludovico say something about going, after we got to terra firma, to the signor's castle among the mountains that he talked of."

"The Apennines !" said Emily eagerly; "oh ! then I have little to hope !"

Annette hastened from the room; and Emily prepared for this unexpected flight, not perceiving that any change in her situation could possibly be for the worse. She had scarcely

hrown her books and clothes into her travelling-trunk, when eceiving a second summons, she went down to her aunt's lressing-room, where she found Montoni impatiently reproving is wife for delay. He went out soon after, to give some further rders to his people, and Emily then inquired the occasion of is hasty journey; but her aunt appeared to be as ignorant as erself, and to undertake the journey with more reluctance.

The family at length embarked, but neither Count Morano or Cavigni was of the party.

The dawn now began to tint the horizon, and to break upon he shores of the Adriatic. Emily did not venture to ask any questions of Montoni, who sat, for some time, in gloomy silence, nd then rolled himself up in his cloak, as if to sleep, while Madame Montoni did the same: but Emily, who could not leep, undrew one of the little curtains of the gondola, and ooked out upon the sea.

Montoni did not embark on the Brenta, but pursued his way n carriages across the country towards the Apennine.

At length the travellers began to ascend among the Appenines. The immense pine-forests which at that period overhung these nountains, and between which the road wound, excluded all iew but of the cliffs aspiring above, except that now and hen an opening through the dark woods allowed the eye a nomentary glimpse of the country below. From the deep olitudes into which she was emerging, and from the gloomy astle of which she had heard some mysterious hints, her sick eart recoiled in despair, and she experienced that, though her nind was already occupied by peculiar distress, it was still live to the influence of new and local circumstances; why else lid she shudder at the image of this desolate castle ?

At length they reached a little plain, where the drivers topped to rest the mules, when a scene of such extent and nagnificence opened below, as drew even from Madame Mononi a note of admiration. Emily lost for a moment her sorrows n the immensity of nature. Beyond the amphitheatre of mounains that stretched below, whose tops appeared as numerous lmost as the waves of the sea, and whose feet were concealed

by the forests—extended the *campagna* of Italy, where cities and rivers and woods, and all the glow of cultivation, were mingled in gay confusion. The Adriatic bounded the horizon, into which the Po and the Brenta, after winding through the whole extent of the landscape, poured their fruitful waves. Emily gazed long on the splendours of the world she was quitting, of which the whole magnificence seemed thus given to her sight only to increase her regret on leaving it: for her, Valancourt alone was in that world; to him alone her heart turned, and for him alone fell her bitter tears.

Towards the close of day the road wound into a deep valley. Mountains, whose shaggy steeps appeared to be inaccessible, almost surrounded it.

"There," said Montoni, speaking for the first time in several hours, "is Udolpho."

Emily gazed with melancholy awe upon the castle, which she understood to be Montoni's; for, though it was now lighted up by the setting sun, the Gothic greatness of its features, and its mouldering walls of dark grey stone, rendered it a gloomy and sublime object. As she gazed, the light died away on its walls, leaving a melancholy purple tint, which spread deeper and deeper as the thin vapour crept up the mountain, while the battlements above were still tipped with splendour. From those, too, the rays soon faded, and the whole edifice was invested with the solemn duskiness of evening. Silent, lonely, and sublime, it seemed to stand the sovereign of the scene, and to frown defiance on all who dared to invade its solitary reign. As the twilight deepened, its features became more awful in obscurity; and Emily continued to gaze, till its clustering towers were alone seen rising over the tops of the woods, beneath whose thick shade the carriages soon after began to ascend.

At length the carriages emerged upon a heathy rock, and soon after reached the castle gates, where the deep tone of the portal bell, which was struck upon to give notice of their arrival, increased the fearful emotions that had assailed Emily. While they waited till the servant within should come to open the gates, she anxiously surveyed the edifice: but the gloom

hat overspread it allowed her to distinguish little more than part of its outline, with the massy walls of the ramparts, and o know that it was vast, ancient, and dreary. From the parts he saw, she judged of the heavy strength and extent of the whole. The gateway before her, leading into the courts, was f gigantic size, and was defended by two round towers rowned by overhanging turrets embattled, where, instead of anners, now waved long grass and wild plants that had taken oot among the mouldering stones, and which seemed to sigh, s the breeze rolled past, over the desolation around them. The owers were united by a curtain pierced and embattled also, elow which appeared the pointed arch of a huge portcullis urmounting the gates: from these the walls of the ramparts xtended to other towers overlooking the precipice, whose hattered outline, appearing on a gleam that lingered in the vest, told of the ravages of war. Beyond these all was lost in he obscurity of evening.

While Emily gazed with awe upon the scene, footsteps were eard within the gates, and the undrawing of bolts; after vhich an ancient servant of the castle appeared, forcing back he huge folds of the portal to admit his lord. As the carriage-vheels rolled heavily under the portcullis, Emily's heart sank, nd she seemed as if she was going into her prison; the gloomy ourt into which she passed, served to confirm the idea; and er imagination, ever awake to circumstance, suggested even nore terrors than her reason could justify.

Another gate delivered them into the second court, grass-rown and more wild than the first, where, as she surveyed hrough the twilight its desolation—its lofty walls overtopped vith bryony, moss, and nightshade, and the embattled towers hat rose above—long suffering and murder came to her houghts. The sentiment was not diminished when she entered n extensive Gothic hall, obscured by the gloom of evening, vhich a light glimmering at a distance through a long perspec-ve of arches only rendered more striking. As a servant brought he lamp nearer, partial gleams fell upon the pillars and the

pointed arches, forming a strong contrast with their shadows that stretched along the pavement and the walls.

The sudden journey of Montoni had prevented his people from making any other preparations for his reception than could be had in the short interval since the arrival of the servant who had been sent forward from Venice; and this, in some measure, may account for the air of extreme desolation that everywhere appeared.

The servant who came to light Montoni bowed in silence, and the muscles of his countenance relaxed with no symptom of joy. Montoni noticed the salutation by a slight motion of his hand, and passed on; while his lady, following and looking round with a degree of surprise and discontent which she seemed fearful of expressing, and Emily, surveying the extent and grandeur of the hall in timid wonder, approached a marble staircase. The arches here opened to a lofty vault, from the centre of which hung a tripod lamp which a servant was hastily lighting; and the rich fretwork of the roof, a corridor leading into several upper apartments, and a painted window stretching nearly from the pavement to the ceiling of the hall became gradually visible.

Having crossed the foot of the staircase and passed through an ante-room, they entered a spacious apartment, whose walls wainscoted with black larch-wood, the growth of the neighbouring mountains, were scarcely distinguishable from darkness itself.

"Bring more light," said Montoni as he entered.

The servant setting down his lamp, was withdrawing to obey him; when Madame Montoni observing that the evening air of this mountainous region was cold, and that she should like a fire, Montoni ordered that wood might be brought.

While he paced the room with thoughtful steps, and Madame Montoni sat silently on a couch at the upper end of it waiting till the servant returned, Emily was observing the singular solemnity and desolation of the apartment, viewed as it now was by the glimmer of the single lamp, placed near a large Venetian mirror that duskily reflected the scene, with the tall

gure of Montoni passing slowly along, his arms folded, and is countenance shaded by the plume that waved in his hat.

The old servant who had received them at the gates now ntered, bending under a load of pine branches, while two of Iontoni's Venetian servants followed with lights.

"Your *Excellenza* is welcome to the castle," said the old man, s he raised himself from the hearth, where he had laid the ood; "it has been a lonely place a long while; but you will xcuse it, signor, knowing we had but short notice. It is near wo years, come next feast of St. Mark, since your *Excellenza* as within these walls."

"Well, how have you gone on in the castle, since I left it?" aid Montoni.

"Why, much as usual, signor; only it wants a good deal of epairing. There is the north tower—some of the battlements ave tumbled down, and had like one day to have knocked ny poor wife (God rest her soul!) on the head. Your *Excellenza* nust know——"

"Well, but the repairs," interrupted Montoni.

"Ay, the repairs," said Carlo: "a part of the roof of the reat hall has fallen in, and all the winds from the mountains ushed through it last winter, and whistled through the whole astle, so that there was no keeping one's self warm, be where ne would. There my wife and I used to sit shivering over a reat fire in one corner of the little hall, ready to die with cold, nd——"

"But there are no more repairs wanted," said Montoni mpatiently.

"O Lord! your *Excellenza*, yes—the wall of the rampart has umbled down in three places; then, the stairs that lead to the vest gallery have been a long time so bad that it is dangerous o go up them: and the passage leading to the great oak cham- er, that overhangs the north rampart—one night last winter ventured to go there by myself, and your *Excellenza*——"

"Well, well, enough of this," said Montoni with quickness: I will talk more with thee to-morrow."

The fire was now lighted; Carlo swept the hearth, placed

chairs, wiped the dust from a large marble table that stood near it, and then left the room.

Montoni and his family drew round the fire. Madame Montoni made several attempts at conversation, but his sullen answers repulsed her, while Emily sat endeavouring to acquire courage enough to speak to him. At length, in a tremulous voice, she said, "May I ask, sir, the motive of this sudden journey ?"— After a long pause she recovered sufficient courage to repeat the question.

"It does not suit me to answer inquiries," said Montoni, "nor does it become you to make them; time may unfold them all; but I desire I may be no further harassed, and I recommend it to you to retire to your chamber, and to endeavour to adopt a more rational conduct than that of yielding to fancies, and to a sensibility which, to call it by the gentlest name, is only a weakness."

Emily rose to withdraw. "Good night, madame," said she to her aunt with an assumed composure that could not disguise her emotion.

"Good night, my dear," said Madame Montoni in a tone of kindness which her niece had never before heard from her. "But you do not know the way to your chamber," said her aunt. Montoni called the servant, who waited in the ante-room, and bade him send Madame Montoni's woman; with whom, in a few minutes, Emily withdrew.

"Do you know which is my room ?" said she to Annette, as they crossed the hall.

"Yes, I believe I do, ma'amselle; but this is such a strange rambling place ! I have been lost in it already; they call it the double chamber over the south rampart, and I went up this great staircase to it. My lady's room is at the other end of the castle."

Emily ascended the marble staircase, and came to the corridor, as they passed through which Annette resumed her chat. "What a wild lonely place this is, ma'am ! I shall be quite frightened to live in it. How often and often have I wished myself in France again ! I little thought, when I came with my

ıdy to see the world, that I should ever be shut up in such a lace as this, or I would never have left my own country ! his way, ma'amselle, down this turning. I can almost believe ı giants again, and such-like, for this is just like one of their astles; and some night or other, I suppose, I shall see fairies oo hopping about in the great old hall, that looks more like church, with its huge pillars, than anything else."

"Yes," said Emily smiling, and glad to escape from more erious thought, "if we come to the corridor about midnight nd look down into the hall, we shall certainly see it illuminated vith a thousand lamps, and the fairies tripping in gay circles o the sound of delicious music; for it is in such places as this, ou know, that they come to hold their revels. But I am fraid, Annette, you will not be able to pay the necessary enance for such a sight: and if once they hear your voice the vhole scene will vanish in an instant."

"Oh ! if you will bear me company, ma'amselle, I will come o the corridor this very night, and I promise you I will hold ny tongue; it shall not be my fault if the show vanishes.—But lo you think they will come ?"

"I cannot promise that with certainty, but I will venure to ay it will not be your fault if the enchantment should vanish."

"Well, ma'amselle, that is saying more than I expected of ou: but I am not so much afraid of fairies as of ghosts; and hey say there are a plentiful many of them about the castle; ow I should be frightened to death if I should chance to see ny of them. But hush, ma'amselle, walk softly ! I have thought everal times something passed by me."

"Ridiculous !" said Emily; "you must not indulge such ancies."

"O ma'am ! they are not fancies, for aught I know; Bene-letto says these dismal galleries and halls are fit for nothing ut ghosts to live in; and I verily believe, if I *live* long in them, shall turn to one myself !"

"I hope," said Emily, "you will not suffer Signor Montoni o hear of these weak fears; they would highly displease him."

"What, you know then, ma'amselle, all about it!" rejoined Annette. Emily did not appear to notice this remark.

"Down this passage, ma'amselle; this leads to a back staircase. Oh! if I see anything, I shall be frightened out of my wits!"

"That will scarcely be possible," said Emily smiling, as she followed the winding of the passage which opened into another gallery; and then, Annette perceiving that she had missed her way while she had been so eloquently haranguing on ghosts and fairies, wandered about through other passages and galleries, till at length, frightened by their intricacies and desolation, she called aloud for assistance: but they were beyond the hearing of the servants, who were on the other side of the castle, and Emily now opened the door of a chamber on the left.

"Oh! do not go in there, ma'amselle," said Annette, "you will only lose yourself further."

"Bring the light forward," said Emily, "we may possibly find our way through these rooms."

Annette stood at the door in an attitude of hesitation, with the light held up to show the chamber, but the feeble rays spread through not half of it. "Why do you hesitate?" said Emily; "let me see whither this room leads."

Annette advanced reluctantly. It opened into a suite of spacious and ancient apartments, some of which were hung with tapestry, and others wainscoted with cedar and black larchwood. What furniture there was, seemed to be almost as old as the rooms, and retained an appearance of grandeur, though covered with dust, and dropping to pieces with damp and with age.

"How cold these rooms are, ma'amselle!" said Annette: "nobody has lived in them for many, many years, they say. Do let us go."

"They may open upon the great staircase, perhaps," said Emily, passing on till she came to a chamber hung with pictures, and took the light to examine that of a soldier on horseback in a field of battle.—He was darting his spear upon a man who lay under the feet of the horse, and who held up one hand

a supplicating attitude. The soldier, whose beaver was up, garded him with a look of vengeance, and his countenance, th that expression, struck Emily as resembling Montoni. She uddered, and turned from it. Passing the light hastily over veral other pictures, she came to one concealed by a veil of ack silk. The singularity of the circumstance struck her, and e stopped before it, wishing to remove the veil, and examine hat could thus carefully be concealed, but somewhat wanting urage. "Holy Virgin ! what can this mean ?" exclaimed Antte. "This is surely the picture they told me of at Venice."

"What picture ?" said Emily. "Why, a picture—a picture," plied Annette hesitatingly, "—but I never could make out actly what it was about either."

"Remove the veil, Annette."

"What ! I, ma'amselle !—I ! not for the world !" Emily, rning round, saw Annette's countenance grow pale. "And ay what have you heard of this picture to terrify you so, y good girl ?" said she.—"Nothing, ma'amselle: I have heard thing, only let us find our way out."

"Certainly, but I wish first to examine the picture; take the ght, Annette, while I lift the veil." Annette took the light, and mediately walked away with it, disregarding Emily's call to ay, who, not choosing to be left alone in the dark chamber, at ngth followed her. "What is the reason of this, Annette ?" id Emily, when she overtook her; "what have you heard ncerning that picture, which makes you so unwilling to stay hen I bid you ?"

"I don't know what is the reason, ma'amselle," replied Antte, "nor anything about the picture; only I have heard there something very dreadful belonging to it—and that it has en covered up in black *ever since*—and that nobody has oked at it for a great many years—and it somehow has to do ith the owner of this castle before Signor Montoni came to e possession of it—and——"

"Well, Annette," said Emily, smiling, "I perceive it is as you y—that you know nothing about the picture."

"No, nothing, indeed, ma'amselle, for they made me promise never to tell:—but——"

"Well," said Emily, who perceived that she was struggling between her inclination to reveal a secret and her apprehension for the consequence, "I will inquire no further——"

"No, pray, ma'am, do not."

"Lest you should tell all," interrupted Emily.

Annette blushed, and Emily smiled, and they passed on to the extremity of this suite of apartments, and found themselves, after some further perplexity, once more at the top of the marble staircase, where Annette left Emily, while she went to call one of the servants of the castle to show them to the chamber for which they had been seeking.

While she was absent, Emily's thoughts returned to the picture; an unwillingness to tamper with the integrity of a servant had checked her inquiries on this subject, as well as concerning some alarming hints which Annette had dropped respecting Montoni: though her curiosity was entirely awakened, and she had perceived that her questions might easily be answered. She was now, however, inclined to go back to the apartment and examine the picture; but the loneliness of the hour and of the place, with the melancholy silence that reigned around her, conspired with a certain degree of awe, excited by the mystery attending this picture, to prevent her. She determined, however, when daylight should have reanimated her spirits, to go thither and remove the veil.

A servant now appeared with Annette, and conducted Emily to her chamber, which was in a remote part of the castle, and at the very end of the corridor from whence the suite of apartments opened through which they had been wandering. The lonely aspect of her room made Emily unwilling that Annette should leave her immediately, and the dampness of it chilled her with more than fear. She begged Caterina, the servant of the castle, to bring some wood and light a fire.

"Ay, lady, it's many a year since a fire was lighted here," said Caterina.

"You need not tell us that, good woman," said Annette

very room in the castle feels like a well. I wonder how you ntrive to live here: for my part, I wish I was at Venice gain." Emily waved her hand for Caterina to fetch the wood. "I wonder, ma'am, why they call this the double chamber," id Annette, while Emily surveyed it in silence, and saw that was lofty and spacious like the others she had seen, and, like any of them, too, had its walls lined with dark larch-wood. he bed and other furniture were very ancient, and had an air gloomy grandeur, like all she had seen in the castle. One of e high casements, which she opened, overlooked a rampart, ut the view beyond was hid in darkness.

In the presence of Annette, Emily tried to support her spirits. ne wished much to inquire when Count Morano was expected the castle; but an unwillingness to ask unnecessary questions, nd to mention family concerns to a servant, withheld her. leanwhile, Annette's thoughts were engaged upon another bject: she dearly loved the marvellous, and had heard of a rcumstance, connected with the castle, that highly gratified is taste. Having been enjoined not to mention it, her in- ination to tell it was so strong that she was every instant n the point of speaking what she had heard; such a strange rcumstance, too, and to be obliged to conceal it was a severe unishment; but she knew that Montoni might impose one uch severer, and she feared to incur it by offending him.

Caterina now brought the wood, and its bright blaze dispelled or a while the gloom of her chamber. She told Annette that er lady had inquired for her; and Emily was once again left her own reflections.

To call off her attention from subjects that pressed heavily n her spirits, she rose and again examined her room and its rniture. As she walked around it she passed a door that was ot quite shut; and perceiving that it was not the one through hich she entered, she brought the light forward to discover hither it led. She opened it, and, going forward, had nearly llen down a steep narrow staircase that wound from it, be- veen two stone walls. She wished to know to where it led, and as the more anxious since it communicated so immediately

with her apartment; but in the present state of her spirits she wanted courage to venture into the darkness alone. Closing the door, therefore, she endeavoured to fasten it, but upon further examination perceived that it had no bolts on the chamber side, though it had two on the other. By placing a heavy chair against it, she in some measure remedied the defect: yet she was still alarmed at the thought of sleeping in this remote room alone, with a door opening she knew not whither, and which could not be perfectly fastened on the inside. Sometimes she wished to entreat of Madame Montoni that Annette might have leave to remain with her all night; but was deterred by an apprehension of betraying what would be thought childish fears.

Her gloomy reflections were soon after interrupted by a footstep in the corridor, and she was glad to see Annette enter with some supper sent by Madame Montoni. Having a table near the fire, she made the good girl sit down and sup with her; and when their little repast was over, Annette, encouraged by her kindness, and stirring the wood into a blaze, drew her chair upon the hearth, nearer to Emily, and said, "Did you ever hear, ma'amselle, of the strange accident that made the signor lord of this castle ?"

"What wonderful story have you now to tell ?" said Emily, concealing the curiosity occasioned by the mysterious hints she had formerly heard on that subject.

"I have heard all about it, ma'amselle," said Annette, looking round the chamber and drawing closer to Emily; "Benedetto told me as we travelled together: says he, 'Annette, you don't know about this castle here, that we are going to ?' 'No,' says I, 'Mr. Benedetto, pray what do you know ?' But, ma'amselle, you can keep a secret, or I would not tell you for the world; for I promised never to tell, and they say that the signor does not like to have it talked of."

"If you promise to keep this secret," said Emily, "you do right not to mention it."

Annette paused a moment, and then said, "Oh, but to you, ma'amselle, to you I may tell it safely, I know."

Emily smiled: "I certainly shall keep it as faithful as yourelf, Annette."

Annette replied very gravely, that would do, and proceeded, This castle, you must know, ma'amselle, is very old, and very trong, and has stood out many sieges as they say. Now it was ot Signor Montoni's always, nor his father's; no, by some law r other, it was to come to the signor if the lady died unarried."

"What lady ?" said Emily.

"I am not come to that yet," replied Annette: "it is the lady am going to tell you about, ma'amselle: but, as I was saying, his lady lived in the castle, and had everything very grand bout her, as you may suppose, ma'amselle. The signor used ften to come to see her, and was in love with her, and offered o marry her: for, though he was somehow related, that did ot signify. But she was in love with somebody else, and would ot have him, which made him very angry, as they say; and ou know, ma'amselle, what an ill-looking gentleman he is vhen he is angry. Perhaps she saw him in a passion, and therefore would not have him. But, as I was saying, she was very nelancholy and unhappy, and all that, for a long time, and—— Holy Virgin ! what noise is that ? did not you hear a sound, na'amselle ?"

"It was only the wind," said Emily; "but do come to the nd of your story."

"As I was saying—oh, where was I ?—as I was saying—she vas very melancholy and unhappy a long while, and used to valk about upon the terrace, there, under the window, by herelf, and cry so ! it would have done your heart good to hear er. That is—I don't mean good, but it would have made you ry too, as they tell me."

"Well, but, Annette, do tell me the substance of your tale."

"All in good time, ma'am: all this I heard before at Venice, ut what is to come I never heard till to-day. This happened great many years ago, when Signor Montoni was quite a young nan. The lady—they called her Signora Laurentini, was very

handsome, but she used to be in great passions too, sometimes, as well as the signor. Finding he could not make her listen to him—what does he do, but leave the castle, and never comes near it for a long time! but it was all one to her; she was just as unhappy whether he was here or not, till one evening—— Holy St. Peter! ma'amselle," cried Annette, " look at that lamp, see how blue it burns!" She looked fearfully round the chamber. "Ridiculous girl!" said Emily, "why will you indulge those fancies? Pray let me hear the end of your story, I am weary."

Annette still kept her eyes on the lamp, and proceeded in a lower voice. "It was one evening, they say, at the latter end of the year, it might be about the middle of September, I suppose, or the beginning of October; nay, for that matter, it might be November, for that, too, is the latter end of the year; but that I cannot say for certain, because they did not tell me for certain, themselves. However, it was at the latter end of the year, this grand lady walked out of the castle into the woods below, as she had often done before, all alone, only her maid was with her. The wind blew cold, and strewed the leaves about, and whistled dismally among those great old chestnut-trees that we passed, ma'amselle, as we came to the castle—for Benedetto showed me the trees as he was talking—the wind blew cold, and her woman would have persuaded her to return: but all would not do, for she was fond of walking in the woods at evening time, and if the leaves were falling about her, so much the better.

"Well, they saw her go down among the woods, but night came, and she did not return: ten o'clock, eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock came, and no lady! Well, the servants thought, to be sure, some accident had befallen her, and they went out to seek her. They searched all night long, but could not find her, or any trace of her: and from that day to this, ma'amselle, she has never been heard of."

"Is this true, Annette?" said Emily in much surprise.

"True, ma'am!" said Annette with a look of horror, "yes, it is true, indeed. But they do say," she added, lowering her voice,

ey do say, that the signora has been seen several times
ce walking in the woods and about the castle in the night:
eral of the old servants, who remained here some time after,
lare they saw her; and since then, she has been seen by some
the vassals, who have happened to be in the castle at night.
rlo the old steward could tell such things, they say, if he
uld ! "

'How contradictory is this, Annette !" said Emily, " you
nothing has been since known of her, and yet she has been
n !"

'But all this was told me for a great secret," rejoined Annette,
hout noticing the remark, "and I am sure, ma'am, you
uld not hurt either me or Benedetto, so much as to go and
it again." Emily remained silent, and Annette repeated
last sentence.

'You have nothing to fear from my indiscretion," replied
ily: "and let me advise you, my good Annette, be discreet
urself, and never mention what you have just told me to any
er person. Signor Montoni, as you say, may be angry, if he
rs of it, but what inquiries were made concerning the lady ?"

'Oh, a great deal, indeed, ma'amselle, for the signor laid
im to the castle directly, as being the next heir; and they
d, that is, the judges, or the senators, or somebody of that
t, said, he could not take possession of it till so many years
re gone by, and then, if after all the lady could not be found,
y, she would be as good as dead, and the castle would be
own; and so it is his own. But the story went round, and
ny strange reports were spread, so very strange, ma'amselle,
t I shall not tell them."

'That is stranger still, Annette," said Emily smiling, and
sing herself from her reverie. "But when Signora Laurentini
s afterwards seen in the castle, did nobody speak to her ?"

'Speak—speak to her !" cried Annette with a look of terror;
, to be sure."

'And why not ?" rejoined Emily, willing to hear further.

'Holy Mother ! speak to a spirit !"

"But what reason had they to conclude it was a spirit, unles they had approached and spoken to it ?"

"Oh, ma'amselle, I cannot tell. How can you ask suc shocking questions ? But nobody ever saw it come in or go ou of the castle: and it was in one place now, and the next minut in quite another part of the castle: and then it never spoke, an if it was alive, what should it do in the castle if it never spoke Several parts of the castle had never been gone into since, the say for that very reason."

"What, because it never spoke ?" said Emily, trying to laug away the fears that began to steal upon her.

"No, ma'amselle, no," replied Annette rather angrily; "bu because something has been seen there. They say, too, there i an old chapel adjoining the west side of the castle, where an time at midnight you may hear such groans !—it makes on shudder to think of them:—and strange sights have been see there——"

"Pr'ithee, Annette, no more of these silly tales," said Emily

"Silly tales, ma'amselle ! Oh, but I will tell you one stor about this, if you please, that Caterina told me. It was one col winter's night that Caterina (she often came to the castle ther she says, to keep old Carlo and his wife company, and so h recommended her afterwards to the signor, and she has live here ever since)—Caterina was sitting with them in the litt hall: says Carlo, 'I wish we had some of those figs to roas that lie in the store-closet, but it is a long way off, and I a loath to fetch them; do, Caterina,' says he, 'for you are youn and nimble, do bring us some, the fire is in nice trim for roastin them: they lie,' says he, 'in such a corner of the store-room, the end of the north gallery; here, take the lamp,' says he, 'an mind, as you go up the great staircase, that the wind throug the roof does not blow it out.' So with that Caterina took th lamp—— Hush ! ma'amselle, I surely heard a noise."

Emily, whom Annette had now infected with her own te rors, listened attentively; but everything was still, and Annet proceeded:

"Caterina went to the north gallery, that is, the wide galle

passed, ma'am, before we came to the corridor, here. As she
nt with the lamp in her hand, thinking of nothing at all——
ere, again !" cried Annette suddenly—"I heard it again ! it
s not fancy, ma'amselle !"

Hush !" said Emily, trembling. They listened, and con-
uing to sit quite still, Emily heard a slow knocking against
wall. It came repeatedly. Annette then screamed loudly,
l the chamber door slowly opened. It was Caterina, come
tell Annette that her lady wanted her. Emily, though she
v perceived who it was, could not immediately overcome her
ror; while Annette, half laughing, half crying, scolded
terina heartily for thus alarming them: and was also terrified
what she had told had been overheard. Emily, whose
id was deeply impressed by the chief circumstance of Annet-
relation, was unwilling to be left alone in the present state
her spirits; but to avoid offending Madame Montoni and
raying her own weakness, she struggled to overcome the
sions of fear, and dismissed Annette for the night.

When she was alone, her thoughts recurred to the strange
tory of Signora Laurentini, and then to her own strange
ation.

Her melancholy was assisted by the hollow sighings of the
id along the corridor and round the castle. The cheerful
ze of the wood had long been extinguished, and she sat with
eyes fixed on the dying embers, till a loud gust, that swept
ough the corridor, and shook the doors and casements,
rmed her; for its violence had moved the chair she had
ced as a fastening, and the door leading to the private stair-
e stood half open. Her curiosity and her fears were again
akened. She took the lamp to the top of the steps, and stood
tating whether to go down; but again the profound stillness
the gloom of the place awed her: and determining to
uire further when daylight might assist the search, she
ed the door, and placed against it a stronger guard.

he now retired to her bed, leaving the lamp burning on the
le; but its gloomy light, instead of dispelling her fear,
sted it; for, by its uncertain rays, she almost fancied she

saw shapes flit past her curtains, and glide into the remot obscurity of her chamber. The castle clock struck one befor she closed her eyes to sleep.

CHAPTER X

D a y l i g h t dispelled from Emily's mind the glooms of super stition, but not those of apprehension. The Count Moran was the first image that occurred to her waking thoughts, an then came a train of anticipated evils which she could neithe conquer nor avoid. She rose and, to relieve her mind from th busy ideas that tormented it, compelled herself to notice exter nal objects. From her casement she looked out upon the wil grandeur of the scene, closed nearly on all sides by Alpin steeps, whose tops peeping over each other faded from th eye in misty hues, while the promontories below were dar with woods that swept down to their base, and stretched alon the narrow valleys. The rich pomp of these woods was parti cularly delightful to Emily: and she viewed with astonishmen the fortifications of the castle spreading along a vast exten of rock, and now partly in decay, the grandeur of the ram parts below, and the towers and battlements and variou features of the fabric above. From these her sight wandere over the cliffs and woods into the valley, along which foame a broad and rapid stream, seen falling among the crags of a opposite mountain, now flashing in the sunbeams, and no shadowed by overarching pines, till it was entirely conceale by their thick foliage. Again it burst from beneath this darkne in one broad sheet of foam, and fell thundering into the val Nearer, towards the west, opened the mountain vista whic Emily had viewed with such sublime emotion on her approac to the castle: a thin dusky vapour, that rose from the valley overspread its features with a sweet obscurity. As this ascende and caught the sunbeams it kindled into a crimson tint, an touched with exquisite beauty the woods and cliffs over whic it passed to the summit of the mountains; then, as the ve

ew up, it was delightful to watch the gleaming objects that rogressively disclosed themselves in the valley—the green turf -dark woods—little rocky recesses—a few peasants' huts—e foaming stream—a herd of cattle, and various images of storal beauty.

When she turned from the casement, her eyes glanced upon e door she had so carefully guarded on the preceding night, nd she now determined to examine whither it led; but on lvancing to remove the chairs, she perceived that they were ready moved a little way. Her surprise cannot be easily nagined, when in the next minute she perceived that the door as fastened. She felt as if she had seen an apparition. The door f the corridor was locked as she had left it, but this door, hich could be secured only on the outside, must have been olted during the night. She became seriously uneasy at the ought of sleeping again in a chamber thus liable to intrusion, remote too as it was from the family, and she determined mention the circumstance to Madame Montoni, and to quest a change.

After some perplexity she found her way into the great hall, nd to the room which she had left on the preceding night, here breakfast was spread, and her aunt was alone; for Iontoni had been walking over the environs of the castle, xamining the condition of its fortifications, and talking for me time with Carlo. Emily observed that her aunt had been eeping. She seized the opportunity of Montoni's absence to ention the circumstance of the door, to request that she might e allowed another apartment, and to inquire again concerning e occasion of their sudden journey. On the first subject her nt referred her to Montoni, positively refusing to interfere the affair; on the last she professed utter ignorance.

Her discourse was, however, interrupted by the entrance of Iontoni, and her countenance immediately assumed a mingled xpression of fear and resentment, while he seated himself at e breakfast table.

Emily, as she observed him in silence, saw that his counten-nce was darker and sterner than usual. Their breakfast passed

in silence, till Emily ventured to request that another apartment might be allotted to her, and related the circumstance which made her wish it.

"I have no time to attend to these idle whims," said Montoni. "It is not probable that any person would take the trouble of going to that remote staircase for the purpose of fastening a door. If it was not fastened when you entered the chamber the wind, perhaps, shook the door and made the bolts slide But I know not why I should undertake to account for so trifling an occurrence."

This explanation was by no means satisfactory to Emily who had observed that the bolts were rusted, and consequently could not be thus easily moved.

Carlo soon after entered with some fruit.

"Your *Excellenza* is tired after your long ramble," said he as he set the fruit upon the table; "but you have more to see after breakfast. There is a place in the vaulted passage leading to——"

Montoni frowned upon him, and waved his hand for him to leave the room. Carlo stopped, looked down, and then added, as he advanced to the breakfast-table, and took up the basket of fruit:

"I made bold, your *Excellenza,* to bring some cherries here for my honoured lady and my young mistress. Will your ladyship taste them, madame?" said Carlo, presenting the basket "they are very fine ones, though I gathered them myself, and from an old tree that catches all the south sun; they are as big as plums, your ladyship."

"Very well, old Carlo," said Madame Montoni; "I am obliged to you."

"And the young signora, too, she may like some of them? rejoined Carlo, turning with the basket to Emily; "it will do me good to see her eat some."

"Thank you, Carlo," said Emily, taking some cherries, and smiling kindly.

"Come, come," said Montoni impatiently, "enough of this Leave the room, but be in waiting: I shall want you presently.

Carlo obeyed, and Montoni soon after went out to examine
ther into the state of the castle; while Emily remained with
aunt, patiently enduring her ill humour, and endeavouring
h much sweetness, to soothe her affliction, instead of resent-
its effect.

When Madame Montoni retired to her dressing-room, Emily
deavoured to amuse herself by a view of the castle. Through
olding-door she passed from the great hall to the ramparts,
ich extended along the brow of the precipice round three
es of the edifice; the fourth was guarded by the high walls
the courts, and by the gateway through which she had passed
the preceding evening. The grandeur of the broad ramparts,
d the changing scenery they overlooked, excited her high
miration; for the extent of the terraces allowed the features
the country to be seen in such various points of view that
y appeared to form new landscapes. Then she would lean
the wall of the terrace, and, shuddering, measure with her
e the precipice below till the dark summits of the woods
rested it.

While she thus leaned, Montoni, followed by two men,
peared ascending a winding path cut in the rock below.
e stopped upon a cliff, and, pointing to the ramparts, turned
his followers, and talked with much eagerness of gesti-
lation.—Emily perceived that one of these men was Carlo;
e other was in the dress of a peasant, and he alone seemed
be receiving the directions of Montoni.

She withdrew from the walls, and pursued her walk, till
e heard at a distance the sound of carriage-wheels, and then
e loud bell of the portal, when it instantly occurred to her
at Count Morano was arrived. As she hastily passed the
ding-doors from the terrace towards her own apartment,
veral persons entered the hall by an opposite door. She saw
em at the extremities of the arcades, and immediately
reated; but the agitation of her spirits, and the extent and
skiness of the hall, had prevented her from distinguishing
e persons of the strangers.

When she thought that they had passed the hall, she venture again to the door, and proceeded unobserved to her roon where she remained agitated with apprehensions and listenin to every distant sound. At length, hearing voices on the ran part, she hastened to her window, and observed Montoni wit Signor Cavigni walking below, conversing earnestly, and ofte stopping and turning towards each other, at which time the discourse seemed to be uncommonly interesting.

Of the several persons who had appeared in the hall, her was Cavigni alone: but Emily's alarm was soon after heightene by the steps of some one in the corridor, who, she apprehende brought a message from the count. In the next moment Annett appeared.

"Ah! ma'amselle," said she, "here is the Signor Cavigi arrived! I am sure I rejoiced to see a Christian person in th place; and then he is so good-natured too, he always takes s much notice of me!—And here is also Signor Verezzi, an who do you think besides, ma'amselle?"

"I cannot guess, Annette; tell me quickly."

"Nay, ma'am, do guess once."

"Well, then," said Emily, with assumed composure, "it is- Count Morano, I suppose."

"Holy Virgin!" cried Annette, "are you ill, ma'amselle you are going to faint! let me get some water."

Emily sank into a chair.

"Stay, Annette," said she feebly, "do not leave me—I sha soon be better: open the casement.—The count, you say—he come, then?"

"Who, I!—the count! No, ma'amselle, I did not say so."

"He is *not* come, then?" said Emily eagerly.

"No, ma'amselle."

"You are sure of it?"

"Lord bless me!" said Annette, "you recover very suddenl ma'am! why, I thought you was dying just now."

"But the count—you are sure, is not come?"

"Oh, yes, quite sure of that, ma'amselle. Why I was lookir out through the grate in the north turret, when the carriag

ve into the courtyard, and I never expected to see such a dly sight in this dismal old castle ! but here are masters and vants too, enough to make the place ring again. Oh, I was dy to leap through the rusty old bars for joy !—Oh, who uld ever have thought of seeing a Christian face in this ge dreary house ! I could have kissed the very horses that ught them."

"Well, Annette, well, I am better now."

"Yes, ma'amselle, I see you are. Oh, all the servants will d merry lives here, now; we shall have singing and dancing the little hall, for the signor cannot hear us there—and droll ries—Ludovico's come, ma'am; yes, there is Ludovico come th them ! You remember Ludovico, ma'am—a tall, handsome ung man—Signor Cavigni's lackey—who always wears his ak with such a grace, thrown round his left arm, and his t set on so smartly, all on one side and——"

"No," said Emily, who was wearied by her loquacity.

"What, ma'amselle, don't you remember Ludovico—who wed the cavaliere's gondola at the last regatta, and won the ze ? And who used to sing such sweet verses about Orlandos, d about the Blackamoors, too; and Charly—Charly—magne, yes, that was the name—all under my lattice, in the west rtico, on the moonlight nights at Venice ? Oh ! I have tened to him——"

"I fear, to thy peril, my good Annette," said Emily: "for seems his verses have stolen thy heart. But let me advise u; if it is so, keep the secret; never let him know it."

"Ah—ma'amselle—how can one keep such a secret as that ?"

"Well, Annette, I am now so much better that you may ve me."

"Oh, but ma'amselle, I forgot to ask—how did you sleep in s dreary old chamber last night ?"—"As well as usual."—id you hear no noises ?"—"None."—"Nor see anything ?"—lothing."—"Well, that is surprising !"—"Not in the least: d tell me why you ask these questions."

"Oh, ma'amselle ! I would not tell you for the world, nor

all I have heard about this chamber, either; it would frighte you so."

"If that is all, you have frightened me already, an may therefore tell me what you know without hurting you conscience."

"O Lord! they say the room is haunted, and has been s these many years."

"It is by a ghost, then, who can draw bolts," said Emily endeavouring to laugh away her apprehensions; "for I left th door open last night and found it fastened this morning."

Annette turned pale, and said not a word.

"Do you know whether any of the servants fastened thi door in the morning, before I rose?"

"No, ma'am, that I will be bound they did not; but I don' know: shall I go and ask, ma'amselle?" said Annette, movin hastily towards the corridor.

"Stay, Annette, I have another question to ask; tell me wha you have heard concerning this room, and whither that stair case leads."

"I will go and ask it all directly, ma'am; besides, I am sur my lady wants me. I cannot stay now, indeed, ma'am."

Montoni having refused Emily another chamber, she deter mined to bear with patience the evil she could not remove, an in order to make the room as comfortable as possible, unpacke her books, her sweet delight in happier days.

To withdraw her thoughts, however, from the subject o her misfortunes, she attempted to read; but her attentio wandered from the page, and at length she threw aside th book, and determined to explore the adjoining chambers of th castle. Her imagination was pleased with the view of ancien grandeur, and an emotion of melancholy awe awakened all it powers, as she walked through rooms obscure and desolat where no footsteps had passed probably for many years, an remembered the strange history of the former possessor of th edifice. This brought to her recollection the veiled pictur which had attracted her curiosity on the preceding night, an she resolved to examine it. As she passed through the chambe

hat led to this, she found herself somewhat agitated; its connexion with the late lady of the castle, and the conversation f Annette, together with the circumstance of the veil, throwing mystery over the object that excited a faint degree of terror.

Emily passed on with faltering steps; and having paused a moment at the door before she attempted to open it, she then astily entered the chamber, and went towards the picture, vhich appeared to be enclosed in a frame of uncommon size, hat hung in a dark part of the room. She paused again, and hen with a timid hand lifted the veil; but instantly let it fall —perceiving that what it had concealed was no picture; and efore she could leave the chamber she dropped senseless on he floor.

When she recovered her recollection, the remembrance of vhat she had seen had nearly deprived her of it a second time. he had scarcely strength to remove from the room, and regain er own; and, when arrived there, wanted courage to remain lone. Horror occupied her mind, and excluded for a time all ense of past and dread of future misfortune: she seated herself ear the casement because from thence she heard voices, though istant, on the terrace, and might see people pass; and these, rifling as they were, were reviving circumstances. When her pirits had recovered their tone, she considered whether she hould mention what she had seen to Madame Montoni; and arious and important motives urged her to do so, among vhich the least was the hope of the relief which an overurdened mind finds in speaking of the subjects of its interest. ut she was aware of the terrible consequences which such a ommunication might lead to; and, dreading the indiscretion f her aunt, at length endeavoured to arm herself with resolution to observe a profound silence on the subject. Montoni and erezzi soon after passed under the casement, speaking cheerully, and their voices revived her. Presently the Signors Berolini and Cavigni joined the party on the terrace; and Emily, upposing that Madame Montoni was then alone, went to seek er; for the solitude of her chamber, and its proximity to that

where she had received so severe a shock, again affected her spirit.

She found her aunt in her dressing-room, preparing for dinner. Emily's pale and affrighted countenance alarmed even Madame Montoni; but she had sufficient strength of mind to be silent on the subject that still made her shudder, and which was ready to burst from her lips. In her aunt's apartment she remained till they both descended to dinner. There she met the gentlemen lately arrived, who had a kind of busy seriousness in their looks, which was somewhat unusual with them, while their thoughts seemed too much occupied by some deep interest to suffer them to bestow much attention either on Emily or Madame Montoni. They spoke little, and Montoni less.

Montoni evidently laboured under some vexation, such as would probably have agitated a weaker mind or a more susceptible heart, but which appeared, from the sternness of his countenance, only to bend up his faculties to energy and fortitude.

It was a comfortless and silent meal. The gloom of the castle seemed to have spread its contagion even over the gay countenance of Cavigni, and with this gloom was mingled a fierceness such as she had seldom seen him indicate. Count Morano was not named, and what conversation there was, turned chiefly upon the wars which at that time agitated the Italian states, the strength of the Venetian armies, and the characters of their generals.

After dinner, when the servants had withdrawn, Emily learned that the cavalier who had drawn upon himself the vengeance of Orsino had since died of his wounds, and that strict search was still making for his murderer. The intelligence seemed to disturb Montoni, who mused, and then inquired where Orsino had concealed himself. His guests, who all, except Cavigni, were ignorant that Montoni had himself assisted him to escape from Venice, replied, that he had fled in the night with such precipitation and secrecy, that his most intimate companions knew not whither.

Emily retired with Madame Montoni, soon after the cloth

as withdrawn, and left the cavaliers to their secret councils. While Emily afterwards leaned on the wall of the ramparts, me peasants at a little distance were seen examining a breach fore which lay a heap of stones, as if to repair it, and a rusty d cannon that appeared to have fallen from its station above. adame Montoni stopped to speak to the men, and inquired hat they were going to do. "To repair the fortifications, our ladyship," said one of them; a labour which she was mewhat surprised that Montoni should think necessary, rticularly as he had never spoken of the castle as of a place which he meant to reside for any considerable time; but she ssed on towards a lofty arch that led from the south to the st rampart, and which adjoined the castle on one side, while the other it supported a small watch-tower that entirely mmanded the deep valley below. As she approached this ch, she saw beyond it, winding along the woody descent of distant mountain, a long troop of horse and foot, whom she new to be soldiers only by the glitter of their pikes and other ms, for the distance did not allow her to discover the colour their liveries. As she gazed the vanguard issued from the oods into the valley; but the train still continued to pour er the remote summit of the mountain, in endless succession; hile, in the front, the military uniform became distin- uishable, and the commanders, riding first, and seeming by eir gestures to direct the march of those that followed, at ngth approached very near to the castle.

Such a spectacle, in these solitary regions, both surprised and armed Madame Montoni, and she hastened towards some easants who were employed in raising bastions before the uth rampart, where the rock was less abrupt than elsewhere. hese men could give no satisfactory answers to her inquiries, it, being roused by them, gazed in stupid astonishment upon e long cavalcade. Madame Montoni then, thinking it neces- ry to communicate further the object of her alarm, sent mily to say that she wished to speak to Montoni; an errand er niece did not approve, for she dreaded his frowns, which e knew this message would provoke; but she obeyed in silence.

As she drew near the apartment in which he sat with his guests, she heard them in earnest and loud dispute; and she paused a moment, trembling at the displeasure which her sudden interrupion would occasion. In the next, their voices sank altogether; she then ventured to open the door, and while Montoni turned hastily and looked at her without speaking, she delivered her message.

"Tell Madame Montoni I am engaged," said he.

Emily then thought it proper to mention the subject of her alarm. Montoni and his companions rose instantly and went to the windows; but these not affording them a view of the troops, they at length proceeded to the ramparts, where Cavigni conjectured it to be a legion of *condottieri* on their march towards Modena.

The cavaliers supped by themselves, and Madame Montoni remained in her apartment, whither Emily went before she retired to her own. She found her aunt weeping, and in much agitation. Emily did not venture to mention again the reluctance she felt to her gloomy chamber; but she requested that Annette might be permitted to remain with her until she retired to rest; and the request was somewhat reluctantly granted. Annette, however, was now with the servants, and Emily withdrew alone.

With light and hasty steps she passed through the long galleries, while the feeble glimmer of the lamp she carried only showed the gloom around her, and the passing air threatened to extinguish it. The lonely silence that reigned in this part of the castle, awed her; now and then, indeed, she heard a faint peal of laughter rise from a remote part of the edifice where the servants were assembled; but it was soon lost, and a kind of breathless stillness remained. As she passed the suite of rooms which she had visited in the morning, her eyes glanced fearfully on the door, and she almost fancied she heard murmuring sounds within, but she paused not a moment to inquire.

Having reached her own apartment, where no blazing wood on the hearth dissipated the gloom, she sat down with a book to enliven her attention till Annette should come, and a fire

ould be kindled. She continued to read till her light was nearly xpired; but Annette did not appear, and the solitude and bscurity of her chamber again affected her spirits, the more, ecause of its nearness to the scene of horror that she had wit- essed in the morning. Gloomy and fantastic images came to er mind. She looked fearfully towards the door of the stair- ase, and then examining whether it was still fastened, found hat it was so. Unable to conquer the uneasiness she felt at the rospect of sleeping again in this remote and insecure apart- ient, which some person seemed to have entered during the receding night, her impatience to see Annette, whom she had idden to inquire concerning this circumstance, became ex- remely painful. She wished also to question her as to the bject which had excited so much horror in her open mind, nd which Annette on the preceding evening had appeared to e in part acquainted with, though her words were very remote rom the truth, and it appeared plainly to Emily that the girl ad been purposely misled by a false report; above all, she vas surprised that the door of the chamber, which contained t, should be left unguarded. Such an instance of negligence lmost surpassed belief. But her light was now expiring; the aint flashes it threw upon the walls called up all terrors of ancy, and she rose to find her way to the habitable part of he castle before it was quite extinguished.

As she opened the chamber door, she heard remote voices, nd soon after saw a light issue upon the farther end of the orridor, which Annette and another servant approached. "I m glad you are come," said Emily: "what has detained you o long ? Pray light me a fire immediately."

"My lady wanted me, ma'amselle," replied Annette in some onfusion; "I will go and get the wood."

"No," said Caterina, "that is my business"; and left the room nstantly.

Caterina soon returned with the wood: and then, when the heerful blaze once more animated the room, and this servant ad withdrawn, Emily asked Annette whether she had made he inquiry she bade her. "Yes, ma'amselle," said Annette,

"but not a soul knows anything about the matter: and old Carlo—I watched him well, for they say he knows strange things—old Carlo looked so as I don't know how to tell; and he asked me again and again if I was sure the door was ever unfastened. 'Lord,' says I—'am I sure I am alive?' And as for me, ma'am, I am all astounded, as one may say, and would no more sleep in this chamber than I would on the great cannon at the end of the east rampart."

"And what objection have you to that cannon, more than to any of the rest?" said Emily smiling: "the best would be rather a hard bed."

"Yes, ma'amselle, any of them would be hard enough, for that matter; but they do say that something has been in the dead of night standing beside the great cannon, as if to guard it."

"Well! my good Annette, the people who tell such stories are happy in having you for an auditor, for I perceive you believe them all."

"Dear ma'amselle! I will show you the very cannon; you can see it from these windows!"

"Well," said Emily, "but that does not prove that an apparition guards it."

"What! not if I show you the very cannon. Dear ma'am, you will believe nothing."

"Nothing probably upon this subject, but what I see," said Emily.

"Well, ma'am, but you shall see it, if you will only step this way to the casement."

Emily could not forbear laughing, and Annette looked surprised. Perceiving her extreme aptitude to credit the marvellous, Emily forbore to mention the subject she had intended, lest it should overcome her with idle terrors; and she began to speak on a lively topic—the regattas of Venice.

"Ay, ma'amselle, those rowing matches," said Annette, "and the fine moonlight nights, are all that are worth seeing in Venice. To be sure that moon is brighter than any I ever saw; and then to hear such sweet music, too, as Ludovico has often

d often sung under the lattice by the west portico ! Ma'am-
le, it was Ludovico that told me about the picture which
u wanted so to look at last night, and——"
"What picture ?" said Emily, wishing Annette to explain
rself.
"Oh, that terrible picture with the black veil over it."
"You never saw it, then ?" said Emily.
"Who, I !—No, ma'amselle, I never did. But this morning,"
ntinued Annette, lowering her voice and looking round the
om, "this morning, as it was broad daylight, do you know,
'am, I took a strange fancy to see it, as I had heard such
ange hints about it, and I got as far as the door, and should
ve opened it, if it had not been locked."
Emily, endeavouring to conceal the emotion this circum-
nce occasioned, inquired at what hour she went to the
amber, and found that it was soon after herself had been
ere. She also asked further questions, and the answers
nvinced her that Annette, and probably her informer, were
norant of the terrible truth, though in Annette's account
mething very like the truth now and then mingled with the
lsehood. Emily now began to fear that her visits to the
amber had been observed, since the door had been closed so
mediately after her departure; and dreaded lest this should
aw upon her the vengeance of Montoni.
Thus they sat till near midnight, but not without many
nts from Annette that she wished to go. The embers were
w nearly burnt out; and Emily heard at a distance the
undering sound of the hall doors, as they were shut for the
ght. She therefore prepared for rest, but was still unwilling
at Annette should leave her. At this instant the great bell of
e portal sounded. They listened in fearful expectation, when,
ter a long pause of silence, it sounded again. Soon after
ey heard the noise of carriage wheels in the courtyard. Emily
nk almost lifeless in her chair; "It is the count," said she.
"What, at this time of night, ma'am !" said Annette: "no,
y dear lady. But, for that matter, it is a strange time of night
r anybody to come !"

"Nay, pr'ithee, good Annette, stay not talking," said Emil in a voice of agony—"go, pr'ithee go, and see who it is."

Annette left the room, and carried with her the light, leavin Emily in darkness, which a few moments before would hav terrified her in this room, but was now scarcely observed b her. She listened and waited in breathless expectation, an heard distant noises, but Annette did not return. Her patienc at length exhausted, she tried to find her way to the corridor but it was long before she could touch the door of the chambe and when she had opened it, the total darkness without mad her fear to proceed. Voices were now heard; and Emily eve thought she distinguished those of Count Morano and Monton Soon after she heard steps approaching; and then a ray of ligh streamed through the darkness, and Annette appeared, whor Emily went to meet.

"Yes, ma'amselle," said she, "you was right, it is the coun sure enough."

"It is he," exclaimed Emily, lifting her eyes towards heaver and supporting herself by Annette's arm.

"Good Lord ! my dear lady, don't be in such a *fluster,* an look so pale, we shall soon hear more."

"We shall, indeed !" said Emily, moving as fast as she wa able towards her apartment. "I am not well, give me air Annette opened a casement, and brought water. The faintne soon left Emily, but she desired Annette would not go till sh heard from Montoni.

"Dear ma'amselle ! he surely will not disturb you at th time of night; why, he must think you are asleep."

"Stay with me till I am so, then," said Emily, who fe temporary relief from this suggestion, which appeared probab enough, though her fears had prevented its occurring to he Annette, with secret reluctance, consented to stay, and Emi was now composed enough to ask her some questions; amor others, whether she had seen the count.

"Yes, ma'am, I saw him alight, for I went from hence to th grate in the north turret, that overlooks the inner courtyar you know. There I saw the count's carriage, and the count

waiting at the great door—for the porter had just gone to d—with several men on horseback, all by the light of the rches they carried."

Emily was compelled to smile. "When the door was opened e count said something that I could not make out, and then t out, and another gentleman with him, I thought to be sure e signor was gone to bed, and I hastened away to my lady's ressing-room to see what I could hear. But in the way I met udovico, and he told me that the signor was up, counselling ith his master and the other signors in the room at the end the north gallery; and Ludovico held up his finger, and laid on his lips, as much as to say—'There is more going on than ou think of, Annette, but you must hold your tongue.' And I did hold my tongue, ma'amselle, and came away to tell ou directly."

Emily sat musing for some time; and then her anxiety was much increased, that she desired Annette would go to the rvants' hall, where it was possible she might hear something the count's intention respecting his stay at the castle.

"Yes, ma'am," said Annette with readiness; "but how am I find the way if I leave the lamp with you?"

Emily said she would light her: and they immediately quitted e chamber. When they had reached the top of the great stair-se, Emily recollected that she might be seen by the count; nd to avoid the great hall, Annette conducted her through me private passages to a back staircase which led directly that of the servants.

As she returned towards her chamber, Emily began to fear at she might again lose herself in the intricacies of the castle, nd again be shocked by some mysterious spectacle; and though e was already perplexed by the numerous turnings, she feared open one of the many doors that offered. While she stepped oughtfully along, she fancied that she heard a low moaning no great distance, and having paused a moment, she heard again and distinctly. Several doors appeared on the right and of the passage. She advanced, and listened. When she ame to the second, she heard a voice, apparently in complaint,

within, to which she continued to listen, afraid to open the door, and unwilling to leave it. Convulsive sobs followed, and then the piercing accents of an agonizing spirit burst forth. Emily stood appalled, and looked through the gloom that surrounded her, in fearful expectation. The lamentations continued. Pity now began to subdue terror; it was possible she might administer comfort to the sufferer, at least, by expressing sympathy, and she laid her hand on the door. While she hesitated, she thought she knew this voice, disguised as it was by tones of grief. Having therefore set down the lamp in the passage, she gently opened the door, within which all was dark, except that from an inner apartment a partial light appeared; and she stepped softly on. Before she reached it, the appearance of Madame Montoni, leaning on her dressing-table, weeping and with a handkerchief held to her eyes, struck her, and she paused.

Some person was seated in a chair by the fire, but who it was she could not distinguish. He spoke now and then in a low voice, that did not allow Emily to hear what was uttered; but she thought that Madame Montoni at those times wept the more. She stepped softly back, and after some further difficulty found the way to her own chamber.

Annette, however, returned without satisfactory intelligence for the servants, among whom she had been, were either entirely ignorant, or affected to be so, concerning the count's intended stay at the castle. They could talk only of the steep and broken road they had just passed, and of the numerous dangers they had escaped, and express wonder how their lord could choose to encounter all these in the darkness of night, for they scarcely allowed that the torches had served for any other purpose but that of showing the dreariness of the mountains. Annette, finding she could gain no information, left them making noisy petitions for more wood on the fire, and more supper on the table.

"And now, ma'amselle," added she, "I am so sleepy—I am sure if you was so sleepy you would not desire me to sit up with you."

'But before you go," rejoined Emily, "let me ask you—
d Signor Montoni left Count Morano when you quitted the
l ?"

'Oh no, ma'am, they were alone together."

'Have you been in my aunt's dressing-room since you left
?"

'No, ma'amselle: I called at the door as I passed, but it was
tened; so I thought my lady was gone to bed."

'Who, then, was with your lady just now ?" said Emily,
getting, in surprise, her usual prudence.

'Nobody, I believe, ma'am," replied Annette; "nobody has
en with her, I believe, since I left you."

Emiyl took no further notice of the subject; and after some
uggle with imaginary fears, her good nature prevailed over
em so far, that she dismissed Annette for the night. She then
musing upon her own circumstances and those of Madame
ontoni.

The door of the staircase was perhaps a subject of more
asonable alarm; and she now began to apprehend, such was
e aptitude of her fears, that this staircase had some private
mmunication with the apartment, which she shuddered even
remember. Determined not to undress, she lay down to
ep in her clothes.

Thus circumstanced, she tried to banish reflection; but her
sy fancy would still hover over the subjects of her interest,
d she heard the clock of the castle strike two before she
osed her eyes.

From the disturbed slumber into which she then sank, she
as soon awakened by a noise which seemed to arise within
r chamber; but the silence that prevailed, as she fearfully
tened, inclined her to believe that she had been alarmed
such sounds as sometimes occur in dreams, and she laid
r head again upon the pillow.

A return of the noise again disturbed her; it seemed to come
om that part of the room which communicated with the
ivate staircase, and she instantly remembered the odd cir-
mstance of the door having been fastened, during the preced-

ing night, by some unknown hand. Her late alarming suspicion concerning its communication also occurred to her. Her heart became faint with terror. Half-raising herself from the bed, and gently drawing aside the curtain, she looked towards the door of the staircase; but the lamp that burnt on the hearth spread so feeble a light through the apartment, that the remote parts of it were lost in shadow. The noise, however, which she was convinced came from the door, continued. It seemed like that made by the drawing of rusty bolts, and often ceased, and was then renewed more gently, as if the hand that occasioned it was restrained by a fear of discovery. While Emily kept her eyes fixed on the spot, she saw the door move, and then slowly open, and perceived something enter the room, but the extreme duskiness prevented her distinguishing what it was. Almost fainting with terror, she had yet sufficient command over herself to check the shriek that was escaping from her lips, and letting the curtain drop from her hand, continued to observe in silence the motions of the mysterious form she saw. It seemed to glide along the remote obscurity of the apartment, then paused, and, as it approached the hearth, she perceived, in a stronger light, what appeared to be a human figure. Certain remembrances now struck upon her heart, and almost subdued the feeble remains of her spirit; she continued, however, to watch the figure, which remained for some time motionless; but then, advancing slowly towards the bed, stood silently at the feet where the curtains, being a little open, allowed her still to see it; terror, however, had now deprived her of the power of discrimination, as well as of that of utterance.

Having continued there a moment, the form retreated towards the hearth, when it took the lamp, surveyed the chamber for a few moments, and then again advanced towards the bed. Emily discovered—Count Morano!

She gazed at him for a moment in speechless affright; while he, throwing himself on his knee at the bedside, besought her to fear nothing; and, having thrown down his sword, would have taken her hand, when the faculties that terror had suspended suddenly returned, and she sprung from the bed in

the dress which surely a kind of prophetic apprehension had prevented her, on this night, from throwing aside.

Morano rose, followed her to the door through which he had entered, and caught her hand as she reached the top of the staircase, but not before she had discovered by a gleam of a lamp another man half-way down the steps. She now screamed in despair, and, believing herself given up by Montoni, saw, indeed, no possibility of escape.

The count, who still held her hand, led her back into the chamber.

"Why all this terror?" said he in a tremulous voice. "Hear me, Emily, I come not to alarm you; no, by Heaven! I love you too well—too well for my own peace."

Emily looked at him for a moment in fearful doubt.

"Then leave me, sir," said she, "leave me instantly."

"Hear me, Emily," resumed Morano—"Hear me! I love, and am in despair—yes—in despair. How can I gaze upon you, and know that it is, perhaps, for the last time, without suffering all the frenzy of despair? But it shall not be so; you shall be mine, in spite of Montoni and all his villainy."

"In spite of Montoni!" cried Emily eagerly; "what is it I hear?"

"You hear that Montoni is a villain," exclaimed Morano with vehemence—"a villain who would have sold you to my love!—who——"

"And is he less who would have bought me?" said Emily, fixing on the count an eye of calm contempt. "Leave the room, sir, instantly," she continued in a voice trembling between joy and fear, "or I will alarm the family, and you may receive that from Signor Montoni's vengeance which I have vainly supplicated from his pity." But Emily knew that she was beyond the hearing of those who might protect her.

"You can never hope anything from his pity," said Morano; "he has used me infamously, and my vengeance shall pursue him. And for you, Emily, for you, he has new plans, more new plans more profitable than the last, no doubt." The gleam of hope which the count's former speech had revived was now

nearly extinguished by the latter; and while Emily's countenance betrayed the emotions of her mind, he endeavoured to take advantage of the discovery.

"I lose time," said he; " I came not to exclaim against Montoni: I came to solicit, to plead—to Emily; to tell her all I suffer, to entreat her to save me from despair; and herself fly from destruction. Emily ! the schemes of Montoni are unsearchable, but, I warn you, they are terrible; he has no principle when interest or ambition leads. Can I love you, and abandon you to his power ? Fly, then, fly from this gloomy prison, with a lover who adores you ! I have bribed a servant of the castle to open the gates, and before to-morrow's dawn you shall be far on the way to Venice."

Emily, overcome by the sudden shock she had received,—at the moment, too, when she had begun to hope for better days,—now thought she saw destruction surround her on every side. Unable to reply, and almost to think, she threw herself into a chair, pale and breathless.

Her silence, though it was that of agony, encouraged the hopes of Morano, who watched her countenance with impatience, took again the resisting hand she had withdrawn, and, as he pressed it to his heart, again conjured her to determine immediately.

"Count Morano," said Emily, at length recovering her voice, "calm, I entreat you, these transports and listen to reason, if you will not to pity. You have equally misplaced your love and your hatred. I never could have returned the affection with which you honour me, and certainly have never encouraged it; neither has Signor Montoni injured you, for you must have known that he had no right to dispose of my hand had he even possessed the power to do so. Leave, then, leave the castle, while you may with safety. Spare yourself the dreadful consequences of an unjust revenge, and the remorse of having prolonged to me these moments of suffering."

"Unjust revenge !" cried the count, resuming the abrupt tones of passion. "Who, that looks upon that face, can imagine a punishment adequate to the injury he would have done me

es, I will leave the castle: but it shall not be alone. I have ifled too long. Since my prayers and my sufferings cannot evail, force shall. I have people in waiting who shall convey ou to my carriage. Your voice will bring no succour; it cannot e heard from this remote part of the castle; submit therefore, silence, to go with me."

This was an unnecessary injunction at present; for Emily as too certain that her call would avail her nothing; and rror had so entirely disordered her thoughts, that she knew ot how to plead to Morano but sat mute and trembling in ie chair.

Morano looked towards the door of the staircase, where no erson appearing, he called aloud, "Cesario !"

A man now appeared at the door of the staircase, and other eps were heard ascending. Emily uttered a loud shriek, as Iorano hurried her across the chamber, and at the same mo- ient she heard a noise at the door that opened upon the corri- or. The count paused an instant, as if his mind was suspended etween love and the desire of vengeance; and in that instant ie door gave way, and Montoni, followed by the old steward nd several other persons, burst into the room.

"Draw !" cried Montoni to the count; who did not pause or a second bidding, but, giving Emily into the hands of the eople that appeared from the staircase, turned fiercely round.

"This in thine heart, villain !" said he, as he made a thrust Montoni with his sword, who parried the blow, and aimed nother; while some of the persons who had followed him into ie room endeavoured to part the combatants, and others escued Emily from the hands of Morano's servants.

"Was it for this, Count Morano," said Montoni, in a cool rcastic tone of voice, "that I received you under my roof, nd permitted you, though my declared enemy, to remain nder it for the night ? Was it that you might repay my ospitality with the treachery of a fiend, and rob me of my iece ?"

"Who talks of treachery ?" said Morano in a tone of unre-

strained vehemence. "Come on, coward, and receive justice at my hands!"

"Coward!" cried Montoni, bursting from the people who held him, and rushing on the count; when they both retreated into the corridor, where the fight continued so desperately, that none of the spectators dared approach them, Montoni swearing that the first who interfered should fall by his sword.

Jealousy and revenge lent all their fury to Morano, while the superior skill and the temperance of Montoni enabled him to wound his adversary, whom his servants now attempted to seize; but he would not be restrained, and, regardless of his wound, continued to fight. He seemed to be insensible both of pain and loss of blood, and alive only to the energy of his passions. Montoni, on the contrary, persevered in the combat with a fierce yet wary valour; he received the point of Morano's sword on his arm: but, almost in the same instant, severely wounded and disarmed him. The count then fell back into the arms of his servant, while Montoni held his sword over him, and bade him ask for life. Morano, sinking under the anguish of his wound, had scarcely replied by a gesture, and by a few words feebly articulated, that he would not—when he fainted; and Montoni was then going to have plunged the sword into his breast as he lay senseless, but his arm was arrested by Cavigni. To the interruption he yielded without much difficulty; but his complexion changed almost to blackness as he looked upon his fallen adversary, and ordered that he should be carried instantly from the castle.

The count's servants having declared that they would not move him till he revived, Montoni stood inactive, Cavigni remonstrating, and Emily, superior to Montoni's menaces, giving water to Morano, and directing the attendants to bind up his wound. At length Montoni had leisure to feel pain from his own hurt, and he withdrew to examine it.

The count, meanwhile, having slowly recovered, the first object that he saw on raising his eyes was Emily bending over him with a countenance strongly expressive of solicitude. He surveyed her with a look of anguish.

Emily, now that he had recovered his senses, was about to ithdraw from the corridor, when a message from Montoni mmanded her to do so, and also that the count, if he was ot already gone, should quit the castle immediately.

"I am going from hence for ever," said he: "perhaps I shall ever see you again. I would carry with me your forgiveness, mily; nay more—I would also carry your good wishes."

"You have my forgiveness then," said Emily.

He regarded her in silence, with a look of fixed despair. ut she, not daring to disobey the command of Montoni, left e corridor to attend him.

He was in the cedar parlour that adjoined the great hall, id upon a couch, and suffering a degree of anguish from s wound, which few persons could have disguised as he did. e was attended by old Carlo, and by Signor Bertolini, but adame Montoni was not with him.

"This is an instance of female caprice," said he, "which I ught to have foreseen. Count Morano, whose suit you obsti- ately rejected so long as it was countenanced by me, you vour, it seems, since you find I have dismissed him."

Emily looked astonished. "I do not comprehend you, sir," id she, "you certainly do not mean to imply, that the design the count to visit the double chamber was founded upon ny approbation of mine."

Turning to a servant who had lately entered the room, he ked whether Morano had quitted the castle. The man nswered that his servants were then removing him on a couch a neighbouring cottage. Montoni seemed somewhat appeased n hearing this; and when Ludovico appeared a few moments fter, and said that Morano was gone, he told Emily she might tire to her apartment.

She withdrew willingly from his presence; but the thought passing the remainder of the night in a chamber which the oor from the staircase made liable to the intrusion of any erson, now alarmed her more than ever; and she determined call at Madame Montoni's room, and request that Annette ight be permitted to be with her.

On calling at her aunt's apartment, she found it fastened. In a few minutes, however, it was opened by Madame Montoni herself.

It may be remembered, that it was by a door leading into the bedroom from a back passage that Emily had secretly entered a few hours preceding. She now conjectured, by the calmness of Madame Montoni's air, that she was not apprised of the accident which had befallen her husband, and was beginning to inform her of it in the tenderest manner she could, when her aunt interrupted her by saying she was acquainted with the whole affair.

Emily knew, indeed, that she had little reason to love Montoni, but could scarcely have believed her capable of such perfect apathy as she now discovered towards him: having obtained permission, however, for Annette to sleep in her chamber, she went thither immediately.

When she reached her apartment, she instantly determined, since the door of the staircase had been left open, and that Annette was now with her, to explore whither it led—a circumstance now materially connected with her own safety. Annette accordingly, half curious and half afraid, proposed to descend the stairs; but on approaching the door they perceived that it was already fastened without, and their care was then directed to the securing it on the inside also, by placing against it as much of the heavy furniture of the room as they could lift. Emily then retired to bed, and Annette continued on a chair by the hearth, where some feeble embers remained.

Montoni on the following morning appeared as usual, except that he wore his wounded arm in a sling; he went out upon the ramparts, overlooked the men employed in repairing them, gave orders for additional workmen, and then came into the castle to give audience to several persons who were just arrived, and who were shown into a private apartment, where he communicated with them for near an hour.

Meanwhile the count remained in a cottage in the skirts of the woods below, suffering under bodily and mental pain, and meditating deep revenge against Montoni. His servant, whom

e had dispatched for a surgeon to the nearest town, which as, however, at a considerable distance, did not return till ne following day; when, his wounds being examined and ressed, the practitioner refused to deliver any positive opinion oncerning the degree of danger attending them; but giving is patient a composing draught, and ordering him to be kept uiet, he remained at the cottage to watch the event.

Emily for the remainder of the late eventful night had been ffered to sleep undisturbed; and when her mind recovered om the confusion of slumber, and she remembered that she as now released from the addresses of Count Morano, her irits were suddenly relieved from a part of the terrible anxty that had long oppressed them: that which remained arose iefly from a recollection of Morano's assertions concerning ne schemes of Montoni.

As she was thus employed, she saw walking on the rampart elow the men who had so lately arrived at the castle. The ght of strangers surprised her, but still more of strangers ch as these. There was a singularity in their dress, and a rtain fierceness in their air, that fixed all her attention.

Montoni went to his wife's apartment, whither Emily folwed soon after; but, finding them in high dispute, was stantly leaving the room, when her aunt called her back, and esired her to stay.—"You shall be a witness," said she, "of y opposition. Now, sir, repeat the command I have so often fused to obey."

Montoni turned with a stern countenance to Emily, and ade her quit the apartment, while his wife persisted in desiring at she would stay. Emily was eager to escape from this scene f contention, and anxious also to serve her aunt; but she espaired of conciliating Montoni, in whose eyes the rising mpest of his soul flashed terribly.

"Leave the room," said he in a voice of thunder. Emily beyed.

As she sauntered on the rampart, Annette appeared at the all door, looked cautiously round, and then advanced to meet er.

"Dear, ma'amselle, I have been looking for you all over the castle," said she. "If you will step his way I will show you a picture."

"A picture!" exclaimed Emily, and shuddered.

"Yes, ma'am, a picture of the late lady of this place. Old Carlo just now told me it was her, and I thought you would be curious to see it. As to my lady, you know, ma'amselle, one cannot talk such things to her."

"Is it veiled?" said Emily pausing.

"Dear ma'amselle!" said Annette, fixing her eyes on Emily's face, "what makes you look so pale?—are you ill?"

"No, Annette, I am well enough, but I have no desire to see this picture. Return into the hall."

"What, ma'am, not to see the lady of this castle?" said the girl; "the lady who disappeared so strangely? Well! now, I would have run to the farthest mountain we can see, yonder, to have got a sight of such a picture; and, to speak my mind, that strange story is all that makes me care about this old castle, though it makes me thrill all over, as it were, wherever I think of it."

"Are you sure it is a picture?" said Emily. "Have you seen it?—Is it veiled?"

"Holy Maria! ma'amselle, yes, no, yes. I am sure it is a picture—I have seen it, and it is not veiled."

The tone and look of surprise with which this was uttered, recalled Emily's prudence; who concealed her emotion under a smile, and bade Annette lead her to the picture. It was in an obscure chamber adjoining that part of the castle allotted to the servants. Several other portraits hung on the walls, covered like this with dust and cobweb.

"That is it, ma'amselle," said Annette in a low voice, and pointing. Emily advanced and surveyed the picture. It represented a lady in the flower of youth and beauty; her features were handsome and noble, full of strong expression, but had little of the captivating sweetness that Emily had looked for, and still less of the pensive mildness she loved. It was a countenance which spoke the language of passion rather

an that of sentiment; a haughty impatience of misfortune not the placid melancholy of a spirit injured, yet resigned. "How many years have passed since this lady disappeared, nnette ?" said Emily.

"Twenty years, ma'amselle, or thereabout, as they tell me; know it is a long while ago." Emily continued to gaze upon e portrait.

"I think," resumed Annette, " the signor would do well to ng it in a better place than this old chamber. Now, in my ind, he ought to place the picture of a lady who gave him l these riches, in the handsomest room in the castle. But he ay have good reasons for what he does: and some people do y that he has lost his riches as well as his gratitude. But hush, a'am, not a word !" added Annette, laying her finger on her ps. Emily was too much absorbed in thought to hear what e said.

Emily, as she passed to her own apartment, saw Montoni down to the hall, and she turned into her aunt's dressing om, whom she found weeping and alone, grief and resentent struggling on her countenance.

"O Emily !" she exclaimed, " I am the most wretched of omen—I am indeed cruelly treated ! Who, with my prospects happiness, could have foreseen such a wretched fate as this ? -who could have thought, when I married such a man as the gnor, that I should ever have to bewail my lot ? But there is judging what is for the best—there is no knowing what is r our good ! The most flattering prospects often change—the st judgments may be deceived—who could have foreseen, hen I married the signor, that I should ever repent my *enerosity* ?"

Emily placed herself in a chair near her aunt, took her hand, nd with one of those looks of soft compassion which might naracterize the countenance of a guardian angel, spoke to er in the tenderest accents. But these did not soothe Madame ontoni, whom impatience to talk made unwilling to listen. e wanted to complain, not to be consoled; and it was by ex-

clamations of complaint only that Emily learned the particular circumstances of her affliction.

"Ungrateful man !" said Madame Montoni, "he has deceived me in every respect; and now he has taken me from my country and friends, to shut me up in this old castle: and here he thinks he can compel me to do whatever he designs ! I did all for the best; I thought he was a man of consequence, of great property, or I am sure I would never have married him,—ungrateful, artful man !" She paused to take breath.

"Dear madame, be composed," said Emily: "the signor may not be so rich as you had reason to expect; but surely he cannot be very poor, since this castle and the mansion at Venice are his. May I ask what are the circumstances that particularly affect you ?"

"What are the circumstances !" exclaimed Madame Montoni with resentment: "why, is it not sufficient that he had long ago ruined his own fortune by play, and that he has since lost what I brought him—and that now he would compel me to sign away my settlement (it was well I had the chief of my property settled on myself !) that he may lose this also, or throw it away in wild schemes which nobody can understand but himself ? And, and— is not all this sufficient ?"

"It is indeed," said Emily; "but you must recollect, dear madame, that I knew nothing of all this."

"Well; and is it not sufficient," rejoined her aunt, "that he is also absolutely ruined, that he is sunk deeply in debt, and that neither this castle nor the mansion at Venice is his own, if all his debts, honourable and dishonourable, were paid."

"I am shocked by what you tell me, madame," said Emily.

"And is it not enough," interrupted Madame Montoni, "that he has treated me with neglect, with cruelty, because I refused to relinquish my settlements, and instead of being frightened at his menaces, resolutely defied him, and upbraided him with his shameful conduct ?"

Want of breath compelled Madame Montoni to stop.

Emily seized a pause of Madame Montoni's voice to speak. "Dear Madame," said she, "but will not this serve to irritate

signor unnecessarily ? Will it not provoke the harsh treat-
nt you dread ?"
Madame Montoni impatiently interrupted her. "Unfeeling,
el girl !" said she; "you may retire to your chamber."
Emily, without replying, immediately left the room, with a
ngled emotion of pity and contempt, and hastened to her
n, where she yielded to the mournful reflections which a
owledge of her aunt's situation had occasioned. Several asser-
ns of Morano, which on the preceding night she had believed
re prompted either by interest or by resentment, now
urned to her mind with the strength of truth. She could not
ubt that Montoni had formerly agreed to give her to the
unt for a pecuniary reward;—his character and his distressed
cumstances justified the belief; these, also, seemed to confirm
orano's assertion, that he now designed to dispose of her,
ore advantageously for himself, to a richer suitor.
Annette brought dinner into her chamber, at which Emily
s surprised, and inquired whose order she obeyed. "My
dy's, ma'amselle," replied Annette: "the signor ordered her
nner to be carried to her own apartment, and so she has
t you yours. There have been sad doings between them,
rse than ever, I think."
Emily, not appearing to notice what she said, sat down to
e little table that was spread for her. But Annette was not
be silenced thus easily. While she waited, she told of the
ival of the men whom Emily had observed on the ramparts,
d expressed much surprise at their strange appearance, as well
at the manner in which they had been attended by Montoni's
der. "Do they dine with the signor, then ?" said Emily.
"No, ma'amselle, they dined long ago in an apartment at
e north end of the castle: but I know not when they are to
, for the signor told old Carlo to see them provided with
erything necessary. They have been walking about the castle,
d asking questions of the workmen on the ramparts. I never
w such strange-looking men in my life, I am frightened
enever I see them."
Emily inquired if she had heard of Count Morano, and

whether he was likely to recover: but Annette only knew that he was lodged in a cottage in the wood below, and that everybody said he must die.

Emily threw her veil over her, and went down to walk upon the ramparts, the only walk, indeed, which was open to her, though she often wished that she might be permitted to ramble among the woods below, and still more, that she might sometimes explore the sublime scenes of the surrounding country. But as Montoni would not suffer her to pass the gates of the castle, she tried to be contented with the romantic views she beheld from the walls. The peasants, who had been employed on the fortifications, had left their work, and the ramparts were silent and solitary. Their lonely appearance, together with the gloom of the lowering sky, assisted the musings of her mind, and threw over it a kind of melancholy tranquillity such as she often loved to indulge. She turned to observe a fine effect of the sun, as his rays, suddenly streaming from behind a heavy cloud, lighted up the west towers of the castle, while the rest of the edifice was in deep shade, except that, through a lofty Gothic arch adjoining the tower, which led to another terrace, the beams darted in full splendour, and showed the three strangers she had observed in the morning. Perceiving them, she started, and a momentary fear came over her as she looked up the long rampart and saw no other persons. While she hesitated, they approached. The gate at the end of the terrace, whither they were advancing, she knew was always locked, and she could not depart by the opposite extremity without meeting them; but before she passed them, she hastily drew a thin veil over her face, which did indeed but ill conceal her beauty. They looked earnestly at her, and spoke to each other in bad Italian, of which she caught only a few words; but the fierceness of their countenances, now that she was near enough to discriminate them, struck her yet more than the wild singularity of their air and dress had formerly done. It was the countenance and figure of him who walked between the other two that chiefly seized her attention, which expressed a sullen haughtiness and a kind of dark watchful villainy

d gave a thrill of horror to her heart. All this was so legibly
itten on his features, as to be seen by a single glance; for
e passed the group swiftly, and her timid eyes scarcely rested
them a moment. Having reached the terrace, she stopped,
d perceived the strangers standing in the shadow of one of
e turrets, gazing after her, and seemingly, by their action, in
rnest conversation. She immediately left the rampart, and
ired to her apartment.

In the evening, Montoni sat late, carousing with his guests
the cedar chamber. His recent triumph over Count Morano,
perhaps some other circumstance, contributed to elevate
spirits to an unusual height. He filled the goblet often, and
ve a loose to merriment and talk.

"Success to your first exploit," echoed the whole company.

"Noble signor," replied Verezzi, "with my good will, you
all build your ramparts of gold."

"Pass the goblet," cried Montoni.—"We will drink to Signora
Aubert," said Cavigni.—"By your leave we will first drink
the lady of the castle," said Bertolini.—Montoni was silent.
o the lady of the castle," said his guests. He bowed his head.

"It much surprises me, signor," said Bertolini, "that you
ve so long neglected this castle; it is a noble edifice."

"It suits our purpose," replied Montoni, "and *is* a noble
ifice. You know not, it seems, by what mischance it came
me."

"It was a lucky mischance, be it what it may, signor," replied
rtolini smiling; "I would that one so lucky had befallen me."

Montoni looked gravely at him. "If you will attend to what
say," he resumed, "you shall hear the story."

The countenances of Bertolini and Verezzi expressed some-
ing more than curiosity; Cavigni, who seemed to feel none,
d probably heard the relation before.

"It is now near twenty years," said Montoni, "since this
stle came into my possession. I inherit it by the female line.
ie lady, my predecessor, was only distantly related to me;
am the last of her family. She was beautiful and rich: I wooed
r; but her heart was fixed upon another, and she rejected

me. It is probable, however, that she was herself rejected of the person, whoever he might be, on whom she bestowed her favour, for a deep and settled melancholy took possession of her; and I have reason to believe she put a period to her own life. I was not at the castle at the time; but as there are some singular and mysterious circumstances attending that event, I shall repeat them."

"Repeat them!" said a voice.

Montoni was silent; the guests looked at each other, to know who spoke: but they perceived that each was making the same inquiry. Montoni at length recovered himself. "We are overheard," said he; "we will finish this subject another time. Pass the goblet."

The cavaliers looked round the wide chamber.

"Here is no person but ourselves," said Verezzi: "pray signor, proceed."

"Did you hear anything?" said Montoni.

"We did," said Bertolini.

"It could be only fancy," said Verezzi, looking round again "We see no person besides ourselves; and the sound I thought I heard seemed within the room. Pray, signor, go on."

Montoni paused a moment and then proceeded in a lowered voice, while the cavaliers drew nearer to attend.

"We are to know, signors, that the Lady Laurentini had for some months shown symptoms of a dejected mind, nay, of disturbed imagination. Her mood was very unequal; sometimes she was sunk in calm melancholy, and at others, as I have been told, she betrayed all the symptoms of frantic madness. It was one night in the month of October, after she had recovered from one of those fits of excess, and had sunk again into her usual melancholy, that she retired alone to her chamber and forbade all interruption. It was the chamber at the end of the corridor, signors, where we had the affray last night. From that hour she was seen no more."

"How! seen no more!" said Bertolini; "was not her body found in the chamber?"

"Were her remains never found?" cried the rest of the mpany all together.

"Never!" replied Montoni.

"What reasons were there to suppose she destroyed herself, en?" said Bertolini.

"Aye, what reasons?" said Verezzi. "How happened it that r remains were never found? Although she killed herself, e could not bury herself."

Montoni looked indignantly at Verezzi, who began to ologize.

"Your pardon, signor," said he; "I did not consider that the dy was your relative when I spoke of her so lightly."

Montoni accepted the apology.

"But the signor will oblige us with the reasons which urged m to believe that the lady committed suicide."

"Those I will explain hereafter," said Montoni; "at present t me relate a most extraordinary circumstance. This conver- tion goes no further, signors. Listen, then, to what I am ing to say."

"Listen!" said a voice.

They were all again silent, and the countenance of Montoni anged.

"This is no illusion of the fancy," said Cavigni, at length eaking the profound silence.

"No," said Bertolini; "I heard it myself, now. Yet here is person in the room but ourselves!"

"This is very extraordinary," said Montoni, suddenly rising. This is not to be borne; here is some deception, some trick; will know what it means."

All the company rose from their chairs in confusion.

"It is very odd!" said Bertolini. "Here is really no stranger the room. If it is a trick, signor, you will do well to punish e author of it severely."

"A trick! what else can it be!" said Cavigni, affecting a ugh.

The servants were now summoned, and the chamber was

searched, but no person was found. The surprise and consternation of the company increased. Montoni was discomposed.

"We will leave this room," said he, " and the subject of our conversation also; it is too solemn."

His guests were equally ready to quit the apartment; but the subject had roused their curiosity, and they entreated Montoni to withdraw to another chamber and finish it: no entreaties could, however, prevail with him. Notwithstanding his efforts to appear at ease, he was visibly and greatly disordered.

"Why, signor, you are not superstitious," cried Verezzi, jeeringly; "you, who have so often laughed at the credulity of others ?"

"I am not superstitious," replied Montoni, regarding him with stern displeasure, "though I know how to despise the commonplace sentences which are frequently uttered against superstition. I will inquire further into this affair." He then left the room; and his guests, separating for the night, retired to their respective apartments.

CHAPTER XI

Montoni made strict inquiry concerning the strange circumstance of his alarm, without obtaining information, and was at length obliged to account for it by the reasonable supposition that it was a mischievous trick played off by one of his domestics. His disagreements with Madame Montoni on the subjects of her settlements were now more frequent than ever; he even confined her entirely to her own apartment, and did not scruple to threaten her with much greater severity should she persevere in her refusal.

In the evening Emily had passed some melancholy hours with Madame Montoni, and was retiring to rest, when she was alarmed by a strange and loud knocking at her chamber door and then a heavy weight fell against it, that almost burst it open. She called to know who was there, and receiving no answer, repeated the call; but a chilling silence followed. It occurred to her—for at this moment she could not reason on the

obability of circumstances—that some one of the strangers ely arrived at the castle had discovered her apartment, and s come with such intent as their looks rendered too possible to rob, perhaps to murder her. The moment she admitted s possibility, terror supplied the place of conviction, and a nd of instinctive remembrance of her remote situation from e family heightened it to a degree that almost overcame her ses. She looked at the door which led to the staircase, pecting to see it open, and listening in fearful silence for a urn of the noise, till she began to think it had proceeded om this door, and a wish of escaping through the opposite e rushed upon the mind. She went to the gallery door, and en fearing to open it, lest some person might be silently rking for her without, she stopped, but with her eyes fixed expectation upon her opposite door of the staircase. As thus e stood, she heard a faint breathing near her, and became nvinced that some person was on the other side of the door, hich was already locked. She sought for other fastening, but ere was none.

While she yet listened, the breathing was distinctly heard, d her terror was not soothed when, looking round her wide d lonely chamber, she again considered her remote situation. she stood hesitating whether to call for assistance, the con- uance of the stillness surprised her; and her spirits would ve revived had she not continued to hear the faint breathing at convinced her the person, whoever it was, had not quitted e door.

At length, worn out with anxiety, she determined to call udly for assistance from her casement; and was advancing it, when, whether the terror of her mind gave her ideal unds, or that real ones did come, she thought footsteps were cending the private staircase; and expecting to see its doors closed, she forgot all other cause of alarm, and retreated wards the corridor. Here she endeavoured to make her escape, t on opening the door was very nearly falling over a person no lay on the floor without. She screamed, and would have ssed, but her trembling frame refused to support her; and

the moment in which she leaned against the wall of the gallery allowed her leisure to observe the figure before her, and to recognize the features of Annette. Fear instantly yielded to surprise. She spoke in vain to the poor girl, who remained senseless on the floor, and then, losing all consciousness of her own weakness, hurried to her assistance.

When Annette recovered, she was helped by Emily into the chamber, but was still unable to speak, and looked round her as if her eyes followed some person in the room. Emily tried to soothe her disturbed spirits, and forbore at present to ask her any questions; but the faculty of speech was never long withheld from Annette, and she explained in broken sentences and in her tedious way, the occasion of her disorder. She affirmed, and with a solemnity of conviction that almost staggered the incredulity of Emily, that she had seen an apparition as she was passing to her bedroom through the corridor.

" I had heard strange stories of that chamber before," said Annette; "as it was so near yours, ma'amselle, I would not tell them to you, because they would frighten you. The servants had told me often and often that it was haunted, and that was the reason why it was shut up: nay, for that matter, why the whole string of these rooms here are shut up. I quaked whenever I went by, and I must say I did sometimes think I heard odd noises within it. But, as I said, as I was passing along the corridor, and not thinking a word about the matter, or even of the strange voice that the signors heard the other night, all of a sudden comes a great light and, looking behind me, there was a tall figure (I saw it as plainly, ma'amselle, as I see you at this moment), a tall figure gliding along (oh, I cannot describe how !) into the room that is always shut up, and nobody has the key of it but the signor, and the door shut directly."

"Then it doubtless was the signor," said Emily.

"Oh, no, ma'amselle, it could not be him; for I left him busy a-quarrelling in my lady's dressing-room !"

"You bring me strange tales, Annette," said Emily.

"Nay, ma'amselle, I will say no more; only if I had not

en frightened I should not have fainted dead away so. I ran fast as I could to get to your door; but what was worst all, I could not call out; then I thought something must be angely the matter with me, and directly I dropt down."

"Was it the chamber where the black veil hangs?" said nily—"Oh, no! ma'amselle, it was one nearer to this. What ll I do to get to my room? I would not go into the corridor ain for the whole world!" Emily, whose spirits had been rerely shocked, and who therefore did not like the thought passing the night alone, told her she might sleep where she s. "Oh, no, ma'amselle," replied Annette, "I would not sleep the room now for a thousand sequins."

Wearied and disappointed, Emily first ridiculed, though she ared, her fears, and then tried to soothe them; but neither empt succeeded, and the girl persisted in believing and firming that what she had seen was nothing human. It was t till some time after Emily had recovered her composure at she recollected the steps she had heard on the staircase—a nembrance, however, which made her insist that Annette ould pass the night with her, and with much difficulty she length prevailed, assisted by that part of the girl's fear hich concerned the corridor.

Early on the following morning, as Emily crossed the hall the ramparts, she heard a noisy bustle in the courtyard, and e clatter of horses' hoofs. Such unusual sounds excited her riosity; and instead of going to the ramparts she went to an per casement, from whence she saw, in the court below, a ge party of horsemen dressed in a singular but uniform bit, and completely, though variously armed. They wore a nd of short jacket composed of black and scarlet, and several them had a cloak of plain black, which covering the person tirely hung down to the stirrups. As one of these cloaks nced aside, she saw beneath daggers, apparently of different es, tucked into the horseman's belt. She further observed at these were carried in the same manner by many of the rsemen without cloaks, most of whom bore also pikes or velins. On their heads were the small Italian caps, some of

which were distinguished by black feathers. Emily thought she had never till then seen an assemblance of faces so savage and terrific. While she gazed she almost fancied herself surrounded by banditti; and a vague thought glanced athwart her fancy —that Montoni was the captain of the group before her, and that his casle was to be the place of rendezvous. The strange and horrible supposition was but momentary, though her reason could supply none more probable, and though she discovered among the band the strangers she had formerly noticed with so much alarm, who were now distinguished by the black plume.

While she continued gazing, Cavigni, Verezzi, and Bertolini came forth from the hall habited like the rest, except that they wore hats with a mixed plume of black and scarlet, and that their arms differed from those of the rest of the party. As they mounted their horses, Emily was struck with the exulting joy expressed on the visage of Verezzi, while Cavigni was gay, yet with a shade of thought on his countenance; and as he managed his horse with dexterity, his graceful and commanding figure, which exhibited the majesty of a hero, had never appeared to more advantage.

As she was hoping, she scarcely knew why, that Montoni would accompany the party, he appeared at the hall door, but unaccoutred. Having carefully observed the horsemen, conversed awhile with the cavaliers, and bidden them farewell, the band wheeled round the court, and, led by Verezzi, issued forth uder the portcullis; Montoni following to the portal, and gazing after them for some time. Emily then retired from the casement, and now, certain of being unmolested, went to walk on the ramparts, from whence she soon after saw the party winding among the mountains to the west, appearing and disappearing between the woods, till distance confused their figures, consolidated their numbers, and only a dingy mass appeared moving along the heights.

Emily observed that no workmen were on the ramparts, and that the repairs of the fortifications seemed to be completed. While she sauntered thoughtfully on, she heard distant foot

eps, and, raising her eyes, saw several men lurking under the stle walls, who were evidently not workmen, but looked as if ey would have accorded well with the party which was gone. ondering where Annette had hid herself so long, who might ave explained some of the late circumstances, and then con-dering that Madame Montoni was probably risen, she went her dressing-room, where she mentioned what had occurred; ut Madame Montoni either would not or could not give any xplanation of the event.

Annette presently came, and, as usual, was full of alarm; to er lady's eager inquiries of what she had heard among the rvants, she replied:

"Ah, madame! nobody knows what it is all about, but old arlo; he knows well enough, but I dare say he is as close as s master. Some say the signor is going out to frighten the nemy, as they call it: but where is the enemy? Then others y, he is going to take away somebody's castle."

"How is that?" said Madame Montoni.

"It is Ludovico who has discovered," said Annette: "but for ercy's sake, madame, don't tell the signor, and you shall now all directly." Madame Montoni said that she would not.

"Well, then, madame, Ludovico says that the signor, my aster is—is—that is, he only thinks so, and anybody, you now, madame, is free to think—that the signor, my master, —is——"

"Is what?" said her lady impatiently.

"That the signor, my master, is going to be—a great robber—at is— he is going to rob on his own account;—to be (but I m sure I don't understand what he means)—to be a—captain f—robbers."

"Art thou in thy senses, Annette?" said Madame Montoni; or is this a trick to deceive me. Tell me, this instant, what udovico *did* say to thee;—no equivocation;—this instant——"

"Nay, madame," cried Annette, "if this is all that I am to get or having told the secret——" Her mistress thus continued insist, and Annette to protest, till Montoni himself appeared, ho bade the latter leave the room; and she withdrew, trembling

for the fate of her story. Emily also was retiring, but her aunt desired she would stay; and Montoni had so often made her a witness of their contention, that he no longer had scruples on that account.

"I insist upon knowing this instant, signor, what all this means," said his wife, "what are all these armed men, whom they tell me of, gone out about?" Montoni answered her only with a look of scorn; and Emily whispering something to her, "It does not signify," said her aunt: "I will know; and I will know, too, what the castle has been fortified for."

"Come, come," said Montoni, "other business brought me here. I must be trifled with no longer. I have immediate occasion for what I demand—those estates must be given up, without further contention; or I may find a way——"

"They never shall be given up," interrupted Madame Montoni: "they never shall enable you to carry on your wild schemes:—but what are these? I will know. Do you expect the castle to be attacked? Do you expect enemies? Am I to be shut up here, to be killed in a siege?"

"Sign the writing," said Montoni, "and you shall know more."

"What enemy can be coming?" continued his wife. "Have you entered into the service of the state? Am I to be blocked up here to die?"

"That may possibly happen," said Montoni, "unless you yield to my demand: for, come what may, you shall not quit the castle till then." Madame Montoni burst into loud lamentation, which she suddenly checked, considering that her husband's assertions might only be artifices employed to extort her consent. She hinted this suspicion, and in the next moment told him also, that his designs were not so honourable as to serve the state, and that she believed he had only commenced a captain of banditti, to join the enemies of Venice in plundering and laying waste the surrounding country.

Montoni looked at her for a moment with a steady and stern countenance; while Emily trembled; and his wife, for once, thought she had said too much. "You shall be removed this night," said he, "to the east turret; there, perhaps, you may

understand the danger of offending a man who has an unlimited power over you."

Emily now fell at his feet, and with tears of terror supplicated for her aunt. Montoni, however, soon interrupted these entreaties with a terrible oath; and as he burst from Emily, leaving his cloak in her hand, she fell to the floor, with a force that occasioned her a severe blow on the forehead. But he quitted the room without attempting to raise her, whose attention was called from herself by a deep groan from Madame Montoni, who continued otherwise unmoved in her chair, and had not fainted. Emily hastening to her assistance, saw her eyes rolling, and her features convulsed.

Having spoken to her without receiving an answer, she brought water, and supported her head while she held it to her lips; but the increasing convulsions soon compelled Emily to call for assistance. At length she found old Carlo and Annette, and they hastened to the dressing-room, where Madame Montoni had fallen on the floor, and was lying in strong convulsions. Having lifted her into the adjoining room, and laid her on the bed, the force of her disorder still made all their strength necessary to hold her.

They continued watching silently, till Madame Montoni uttered a low sigh, when Emily took her hand, and spoke soothingly to her.

Emily continued with Madame Montoni till she withdrew to her apartment for the night.

At that hour the castle was perfectly still, and every inhabitant of it, except herself, seemed to have retired to rest. As she passed along the wide and lonely galleries, dusky and silent, she felt forlorn and apprehensive of—she scarcely knew what; but when entering the corridor she recollected the incident of the preceding night, a dread seized her, lest a subject of alarm similar to that which had befallen Annette should occur to her, and which, whether real or ideal, would, she felt, have an almost equal effect upon her weakened spirits. The chamber to which Annette had alluded she did not exactly know, but understood it to be one of those she must pass in the way to

her own; and sending a fearful look forward into the gloom, she stepped lightly and cautiously along, till coming to a door, from whence issued a low sound, she hesitated and paused; and during the delay of that moment her fears so much increased, that she had no power to move from the spot. Believing that she heard a human voice within, she was somewhat revived; but in the next moment the door was opened, and a person whom she conceived to be Montoni appeared, who instantly started back and closed it, though not before she had seen by the light that burned in the chamber, another person sitting in a melancholy attitude by the fire. Her terror vanished, but her astonishment only began, which was now roused by the mysterious secrecy of Montoni's manner, and by the discovery of a person whom he thus visited at midnight, in an apartment which had long been shut up, and of which such extraordinary reports were circulated.

While she thus continued hesitating, strongly prompted to watch Montoni's motions, yet fearing to irritate him by appearing to notice them, the door was again opened cautiously, and as instantly closed as before. She then stepped softly to her chamber, which was the next but one to this, but having put down her lamp, returned to an obscure corner of the corridor, to observe the proceedings of this half-seen person, and to ascertain whether it was indeed Montoni.

Having waited in silent expection for a few minutes, with her eyes fixed on the door, it was again opened, and the same person appeared, whom she now knew to be Montoni. He looked cautiously around, without perceiving her, then, stepping forward, closed the door and left the corridor. Soon after, Emily heard the door fastened on the inside, and she withdrew to her chamber, wondering at what she had witnessed.

It was now twelve o'clock. As she closed her casement, she heard footsteps on the terrace below, and saw imperfectly through the gloom several persons advancing, who passed under the casement. She then heard the clink of arms, and in the next moment the watchword; she understood that these men

were for the first time relieving guard in the castle. Having listened till all was again still, she retired to sleep.

CHAPTER XII

On the following morning Emily went early to the apartment of Madame Montoni, who had slept well, and was much recovered. Her spirits had also returned with her health, and her resolution to oppose Montoni's demands revived, though it yet struggled with her fears, which Emily, who trembled for the consequence of further opposition, endeavoured to confirm.

While she thus sat, Montoni entered the room, and, without noticing his wife's indisposition, said that he came to remind her of the impolicy of trifling with him, and that he gave her only till the evening to determine, whether she would consent to his demand, or compel him, by a refusal, to remove her to the east turret. He added, that a party of cavaliers would dine with him that day, and that he expected that she would sit at the head of the table, where Emily also must be present.

When she withdrew to prepare for dinner, she dressed herself with even more simplicity than usual, that she might escape observation—a policy which did not avail her—for, as she repassed to her aunt's apartment she was met by Montoni, who censured what he called her prudish appearance, and insisted that she should wear the most splendid dress she had, even that which had been prepared for her intended nuptials with Count Morano, and which, it now appeared, her aunt had carefully brought with her from Venice. This was made, not in the Venetian, but in the Neapolitan fashion, so as to set off the shape and figure to the utmost advantage. In it, her beautiful, chestnut tresses were negligently bound up in pearls, and suffered to fall back again on her neck. The simplicity of a better taste than Madame Montoni's was conspicuous in this dress, splendid as it was, and Emily's unaffected beauty never had appeared more captivatingly. She had now only to hope that Montoni's order was prompted, not by any extraordinary design, but by an ostentation of displaying his family, richly

attired, to the eyes of strangers. As she descended to dinner, the emotion of her mind threw a faint blush over her countenance, and heigtened its interesting expression; for timidity had made her linger in her apartment till the utmost moment, and when she entered the hall, in which a kind of state dinner was spread, Montoni and his guests were already seated at the table. She was then going to place herself by her aunt; but Montoni waved his hand, and two of the cavaliers rose, and seated her between them.

The elder of these was a tall man, with strong Italian features, an aquiline nose, and dark penetrating eyes, that flashed with fire when his mind was agitated, and even in its state of rest retained somewhat of the wildness of the passions. His visage was long and narrow, and his complexion of a sickly yellow.

The other, who appeared to be about forty, had features of a different cast, yet Italian, and his look was slow, subtle, and penetrating; his eyes, of a dark grey, were small and hollow; his complexion was a sunburnt brown, and the contour of his face, though inclined to oval, was irregular and ill-formed.

Eight other guests sat round the table, who were all dressed in a uniform, and had all an expression, more or less, of wild fierceness, of subtle design, or of licentious passions. As Emily timidly surveyed them, she remembered the scene of the preceding morning, and again almost fancied herself surrounded by banditti. The scene in which they sat assisted the illusion: it was an ancient hall, gloomy from the style of its architecture, from its great extent, and because almost the only light it received was from one large Gothic window, and from a pair of folding doors, which, being open, admitted likewise a view of the west rampart, with the wild mountains of the Apennine beyond.

The middle compartment of this hall rose into a vaulted roof enriched with fretwork, and supported on three sides by pillars of marble; beyond these, long colonnades retired in gloomy grandeur, till the extent was lost in twilight. The lightest footsteps of the servants, as they advanced through these, were returned in whispering echoes, and their figures,

seen at a distance imperfectly through the dusk, frequently awakened Emily's imagination.

During dinner, the conversation was chiefly on war and politics. They talked with energy on the state of Venice, its dangers, the character of the reigning Doge, and of the chief senators; and then spoke of the state of Rome. When the repast was over, they rose, and each filling his goblet with wine from the gilded ewer that stood beside him, drank, "Success to our exploits!" Montoni was lifting his goblet to his lips to drink this toast, when suddenly the wine hissed, rose to the brim, and as he held the glass from him, it burst into a thousand pieces.

To him who constantly used that sort of Venice glass, which had the quality of breaking upon receiving poisoned liquor, a suspicion that some of his guests had endeavoured to betray him instantly occurred, and he ordered all the gates to be closed, drew his sword, and, looking round on them, who stood in silent amazement, exclaimed, "Here is a traitor among us; let those that are innocent assist in discovering the guilty."

Indignation flashed from the eyes of the cavaliers, who all drew their swords; and Madame Montoni, terrified at what might ensue, was hastening from the hall, when her husband commanded her to stay; but his further words could not now be distinguished, for the voice of every person rose together. His order that all the servants should appear was at length obeyed, and they declared their ignorance of any deceit—a protestation which could not be believed; for it was evident that, as Montoni's liquor and his only, had been poisoned, a deliberate design had been formed against his life, which could not have been carried so far towards its accomplishment, without the connivance of the servant who had the care of the wine ewers.

This man, with another, whose face betrayed either the consciousness of guilt or the fear of punishment, Montoni ordered to be chained instantly, and confined in the strong-room which had formerly been used as a prison. Thither likewise he would have sent all his guests, had he not foreseen the consequence of so bold and unjustifiable a proceeding. As to

those, therefore, he contented himself with swearing that no man should pass the gates till this extraordinary affair had been investigated; and then sternly bade his wife retire to her apartment, whither he suffered Emily to attend her.

In about half an hour he followed to the dressing-room; and Emily observed with horror his dark countenance and quivering lip, and heard him denounce vengeance on her aunt.

"It will avail you nothing," said he to his wife, "to deny the fact; I have proof of your guilt. Your only chance of mercy rests on a full confession;—there is nothing to hope from sullenness, or falsehood; your accomplice has confessed all."

Emily's fainting spirits were roused by astonishment, as she heard her aunt accused of a crime so atrocious, and she could not for a moment admit the possibility of her guilt. Meanwhile Madame Montoni's agitation did not permit her to reply; alternately her complexion varied from livid paleness to a crimson flush; and she trembled,—but whether with fear, or with indignation, it were difficult to decide.

"Spare your words," said Montoni, seeing her about to speak, "your countenance makes full confession of your crime. —You shall be instantly removed to the east turret."

"This accusation," said Madame Montoni, speaking with difficulty, "is used only as an excuse for your cruelty; I disdain to reply to it. You do not believe me guilty."

Emily raised her eyes calmly to heaven. "Here is, indeed, then, nothing to hope !" said she.

"Peace !" cried Montoni, "or you shall find there is something to fear."

He turned to his wife, who had now recovered her spirits, and who vehemently and wildly remonstrated upon this mysterious suspicion; but Montoni's rage heightened with her indignation; and Emily, dreading the event of it, threw herself between them, and clasped his knees in silence, looking up in his face with an expression that might have softened the heart of a fiend. Whether his was hardened by a conviction of Madame Montoni's guilt, or that a bare suspicion of it made him eager to exercise vengeance, he was totally and alike insen-

sible to the distress of his wife, and to the pleading looks of Emily, whom he made no attempt to raise, but was vehemently menacing both, when he was called out of the room by some person at the door. As he shut the door, Emily heard him turn the lock and take out the key; so that Madame Montoni and herself were now prisoners; and she saw that his designs became more and more terrible.

In the hall, confusion and tumult still reigned. Emily, as she listened anxiously to the murmur that sounded along the gallery, sometimes fancied she heard the clashing of swords; and when she considered the nature of the provocation given by Montoni and his impetuosity, it appeared probable that nothing less than arms would terminate the contention. Madame Montoni having exhausted all her expressions of indignation, and Emily hers of comfort, they remained silent, in that kind of breathless stillness, which, in nature, often succeeds to the uproar of conflicting elements; a stillness like the morning that dawn upon the ruins of an earthquake.

An uncertain kind of terror pervaded Emily's mind; the circumstances of the past hour still came dimly and confusedly to her memory; and her thoughts were various and rapid, though without tumult.

From this state of waking visions she was recalled by a knocking at the chamber-door, and, inquiring who was there, heard the whispering voice of Annette.

"Dear madame, let me come in; I have a great deal to say," said the poor girl.

"The door is locked," answered her lady.

"Yes, ma'am, but do pray open it."

"The signor has the key," said Madame Montoni.

"O blessed Virgin! what will become of us?" exclaimed Annette.

"Assist us to escape," said her mistress. "Where is Ludovico?"

"Below in the hall, ma'am, amongst them all, fighting with the best of them!"

"Fighting! Who are fighting?" cried Madame Montoni.

"Why, the signor, ma'am, and all the signors, and a great many more."

"Is any person much hurt?" said Emily in a tremulous voice.—"Hurt! Yes, ma'amselle,—there they lie bleeding, and the swords are clashing, and—— O holy saints! Do let me in, ma'am, they are coming this way—I shall be murdered!"

"Fly!" cried Emily, "fly! we cannot open the door."

Annette repeated that they were coming, and in the same moment fled.

"Be calm, madame," said Emily, turning to her aunt; "I entreat you to be calm; I am not frightened, not frightened in the least; do not you be alarmed."

"You can scarcely support yourself," replied her aunt; "Merciful God! what is it they mean to do with us?"

"They come, perhaps to liberate us," said Emily; "Signor Montoni perhaps is—is conquered."

"They are coming!" cried Madame Montoni—"I hear their steps—they are at the door."

Emily turned her languid eyes to the door, but terror deprived her of utterance. The key sounded in the lock; the door opened, and Montoni appeared, followed by three ruffian-like men. "Execute your orders," said he, turning to them, and pointing to his wife, who shrieked, but was immediately carried from the room; while Emily sank senseless on a couch, by which she had endeavoured to support herself. When she recovered, she was alone, and recollected only that Madame Montoni had been there, together with some unconnected particulars of the preceding transaction, which were, however, sufficient to renew all her terror.

When her recollection was more complete, she raised herself and went, but with only a faint hope, to examine whether the door was unfastened. It was so, and she then stepped timidly out into the gallery, but paused there, uncertain which way she should proceed. Her first wish was to gather some information as to her aunt, and she at length turned her steps to go to the lesser hall, where Annette and the other servants usually waited.

Everywhere, as she passed, she heard, from a distance, the proar of contention, and the figures and faces which she met, urrying along the passages, struck her mind with dismay. Emily might now have appeared like an angel of light encompassed by fiends. At length she reached the lesser hall, which vas silent and deserted, but, panting for breath, she sat down o recover herself. The total stillness of this place was as awful s the tumult from which she had escaped; but she had now ime to recall her scattered thoughts, to remember her personal anger; and to consider of some means of safety. She perceived hat it was useless to seek Madame Montoni, through the wide xtent and intricacies of the castle, now too, when every avenue eemed to be beset with ruffians; in this hall she could not esolve to stay, for she knew not how soon it might become heir place of rendezvous; and though she wished to go to her hamber, she dreaded again to encounter them on the way.

Thus she sat, trembling and hesitating, when a distant murnur broke on the silence, and grew louder and louder, till she listinguished voices and steps approaching. She then rose to go; but the sounds came along the only passage by which she ould depart, and she was compelled to await in the hall the rrival of the persons whose steps she heard. As these advanced, he distinguished groans, and then saw a man borne slowly long by four others. Her spirits faltered at the sight, and she eaned against the wall for support. The bearers meanwhile ntered the hall, and being too busily occupied to detain or ven notice Emily, she attempted to leave it; but her strength ailed, and she again sat down on the bench. A damp chillness ame over her; her sight became confused; she knew not what ad passed, or where she was, yet the groans of the wounded erson still vibrated on her heart. In a few moments the tide f life seemed again to flow; she began to breathe more freely, nd her senses revived. She had not fainted, nor had ever otally lost her consciousness, but had contrived to support erself on the bench; still without courage to turn her eyes pon the unfortunate object which remained near her, and bout whom the men were yet too much engaged to attend her.

When her strength returned, she rose, and was suffered to leave the hall, though her anxiety, having produced some vain inquiries concerning Madame Montoni, had thus made a discovery of herself. Towards her chamber she now hastened as fast as her steps would bear her; for she still perceived, upon her passage, the sounds of confusion at a distance, and she endeavoured, by taking her way through some obscure rooms, to avoid encountering the persons, whose looks had terrified her before, as well as those parts of the castle where the tumult might still rage.

At length she reached her chamber, and, having secured the door of the corridor, felt herself for a moment in safety. A profound stillness reigned in this remote apartment, which not even the faint murmur of the most distant sounds now reached. She sat down near one of the casements; and as she gazed on the mountain-view beyond, the deep repose of its beauty struck her with all the force of contrast, and she could scarcely believe herself so near a scene of savage discord. The contending elements seemed to have retired from their natural spheres, and to have collected themselves into the mind of men, for there alone the tempest now reigned.

Emily tried to tranquillize her spirits; but anxiety made her constantly listen for some sound, and often look out upon the ramparts, where all, however, was lonely and still. As a sense of her own immediate danger had decreased, her apprehension concerning Madame Montoni heightened, who, she remembered, had been fiercely threatened with confinement in the east turret, and it was possible that her husband had satisfied his vengeance with this punishment. She therefore determined, when night should return, and the inhabitants of the castle should be asleep, to explore the way to the turret, which, as the direction it stood in was mentioned, appeared not very difficult to be done.

The sun at length set behind the western mountains; his fiery beams faded from the clouds, and then a dun melancholy purple drew over them, and gradually involved the features of the

country below. Soon after, the sentinels passed on the rampart to commence the watch.

Twilight had now spread its gloom over every object; the dismal obscurity of her chamber recalled fearful thoughts: but she remembered that, to procure a light, she must pass through a great extent of the castle, and above all, through the halls where she had already experienced so much horror. Darkness indeed in the present state of her spirits made silence and solitude terrible to her.

Then recollecting the mysterious inhabitant of the neighbouring apartment, her terror changed its object. "He is not a prisoner," said she, "though he remains in one chamber, for Montoni did not fasten the door when he left it; the unknown person himself did this; it is certain, therefore, he can come out when he pleases."

She paused; for notwithstanding the terrors of darkness, she considered it to be very improbable, whoever he was, that he could have any interest in intruding upon her retirement; and again the subject of her emotion changed, when remembering her nearness to the chamber where the veil had formerly disclosed a dreadful spectacle, she doubted whether some passage might not communicate between it and the insecure door of the staircase.

It was now entirely dark, and she left the casement. As she sat with her eyes fixed on the hearth, she thought she perceived a spark of light; it twinkled and disappeared, and then again was visible. At length, with much care, she fanned the embers of a wood fire, that had been lighted in the morning, into flame, and, having communicated it to a lamp which always stood in her room, felt a satisfaction not to be conceived without a review of her situation. Her first care was to guard the door of the staircase, for which purpose she placed against it all the furniture she could move, and she was thus employed for some time.

Thus heavily moved the hours till midnight, when she counted the sullen notes of the great clock as they rolled along the rampart unmingled with any sound except the distant

footfall of a sentinel who came to relieve guard. She now thought she might venture towards the turret, and having gently opened the chamber door to examine the corridor, and to listen if any person was stirring in the castle, found all around in perfect stillness. Yet no sooner had she left the room than she perceived a light flash on the walls of the corridor, and without waiting to see by whom it was carried, she shrunk back and closed her door.

When the chimes had tolled another half-hour, she once more opened the door; and perceiving that no person was in the corridor, hastily crossed into a passage that led along the south side of the castle towards the staircase, whence she believed she could easily find her way to the turret. Often pausing on her way, listening apprehensively to the murmurs of the wind, and looking fearfully onward into the gloom of the long passages, she at length reached the staircase; but there her perplexity began. Two passages appeared, of which she knew not how to prefer one, and was compelled at last to decide by chance rather than by circumstances. That she entered opened first into a wide gallery, along which she passed lightly and swiftly; for the lonely aspect of the place awed her, and she started at the echo of her own steps.

On a sudden, she thought she heard a voice, and not distinguishing from whence it came, feared equally to proceed or to return. For some moments she stood in an attitude of listening expectation, shrinking almost from herself, and scarcely daring to look round her. The voice came again: but though it was now near her, terror did not allow her to judge exactly whence it proceeded. She thought, however, that it was the voice of complaint, and her belief was soon confirmed by a low moaning sound, that seemed to proceed from one of the chambers opening into the gallery. It instantly occurred to her that Madame Montoni might be there confined, and she advanced to the door to speak, but was checked by considering that she was perhaps going to commit herself to a stranger, who might discover her to Montoni; for though this person, whoever it was, seemed to be in affliction, it did not follow that he was a prisoner.

While these thoughts passed over her mind, and left her still in hesitation, the voice spoke again, and calling Ludovico, she then perceived it to be that of Annette; on which, no longer hesitating, she went in joy to answer her.

"Ludovico !" cried Annette, sobbing—"Ludovico !"

"It is I," said Emily, trying to open the door. "How came you here ? Who shut you up ?"

"Ludovico !" repeated Annette—"O Ludovico !"

"It is not Ludovico, it is I—Mademoiselle Emily."

Annette ceased sobbing, and was silent.

"If you can open the door, let me in," said Emily; "here is no person to hurt you."

"Ludovico !—O Ludovico !" cried Annette.

Emily now lost her patience; and the fear of being overheard increasing, she was even nearly about to leave the door, when she considered that Annette might possibly know something of the situation of Madame Montoni, or direct her to the turret. At length she obtained a reply, though little satisfactory, to her questions; for Annette knew nothing of Madame Montoni, and only conjured Emily to tell her what was become of Ludovico. Of him she had no information to give, and she again asked who had shut Annette up.

"Ludovico," said the poor girl, "Ludovico shut me up. When I ran away from the dressing-room door to-day, I went I scarcely knew where for safety; and in this gallery here, I met Ludovico, who hurried me into this chamber, and locked me up to keep me out of harm, as he said. But he was in such a hurry himself he hardly spoke ten words; but he told me he would come back and let me out when all was quiet, and he took away the key with him. Now all these hours have passed, and I have neither seen nor heard a word of him; they have murdered him—I know they have !"

Emily suddenly remembered the wounded person whom she had seen borne into the servants' hall, and scarcely doubted that he was Ludovico; but she concealed the circumstance from Annette, and endeavoured to comfort her. Then, impatient to

learn something of her aunt, she again inquired the way to the turret.

"Oh! you are not going, ma'amselle," said Annette; "for Heaven's sake, do not go and leave me here by myself!"

"Nay, Annette, you do not think I can wait in the gallery all night," replied Emily. "Direct me to the turret; in the morning I will endeavour to release you."

At length she obtained something like a direction to the east turret, and quitted the door, from whence, after many intricacies and perplexities, she reached the steep and winding stairs of the turret, at the foot of which she stopped to rest, and to reanimate her courage with a sense of her duty. As she surveyed this dismal place she perceived a door on the opposite side of the staircase, and anxious to know whether it would lead her to Madame Montoni, she tried to undraw the bolts which fastened it. A fresher air came to her face, as she unclosed the door, which opened upon the east rampart; and looking out upon the terrace, she perceived only the faint outline of the walls and of some towers, while above, heavy clouds borne along the wind seemed to mingle with the stars and wrap the night in thicker darkness. As she gazed, now willing to defer the moment of certainty, from which she expected only confirmation of evil, a distant footstep reminded her that she might be observed by the men on watch; and hastily closing the door, she took her lamp, and passed up the staircase. Trembling came upon her as she ascended through the gloom. To her melancholy fancy this seemed to be a place of death, and the chilling silence that reigned confirmed its character.

At length a track of blood upon a stair caught her eye; and instantly she perceived that the wall and several other steps were stained. She paused, again struggled to support herself, and the lamp almost fell from her trembling hand. Still no sound was heard, no living being seemed to inhabit the turret: a thousand times she wished herself again in her chamber; dreaded to inquire further—dreaded to encounter some horrible spectacle—and yet could not resolve, now that she was so

ear the termination of her efforts, to desist from them. Having again collected courage to proceed, after ascending bout halfway up the turret she came to another door; but here gain she stopped in hesitation, listened for sounds within, and ummoning all her resolution, unclosed it, and entered a cham- er, which, as her lamp shot its feeble rays through the dark- ess, seemed to exhibit only dew-stained and deserted walls. As she stood examining it, in fearful expectation of discovering he remains of her unfortunate aunt; she perceived something ying in an obscure corner of the room, and struck with a orrible conviction, she became for an instant motionless and early insensible. Then with a kind of desperate resolution she urried towards the object that excited her terror, when erceiving the clothes of some person on the floor, she caught old of them, and found in her grasp the old uniform of a oldier, beneath which appeared a heap of pikes and other rms. Scarcely daring to trust her sight, she continued for some moments to gaze on the object of her late alarm; and then left he chamber, so much comforted and occupied by the convic- ion that her aunt was not there, that she was going to descend he turret without inquiring further; when on turning to do o, she observed upon some steps on the second flight an appear- nce of blood; and remembering that there was yet another hamber to be explored, she again followed the windings of the scent. Still, as she ascended, the track of blood glared upon he stairs.

It led her to the door of a landing-place that terminated hem, but she was unable to follow it farther.

Having listened in vain for some sound that might confirm or destroy her fears, she at length laid her hand on the lock, nd finding it fastened, called on Madame Montoni; but only chilling silence ensued.

"She is dead!" she cried,—"murdered! her blood is on the tairs!"

Emily grew very faint; could support herself no longer; and ad scarcely presence of mind to set down the lamp and place erself on a step.

When a recollection returned, she spoke again at the door, and again attempted to open it; and having lingered for some time without receiving any answer, or hearing any sound, she descended the turret, and, with all the swiftness her feebleness would permit, sought her own apartment.

As she turned into the corridor, the door of a chamber opened, from whence Montoni came forth; but Emily, more terrified than ever to behold him, shrunk back into the passage soon enough to escape being noticed, and heard him close the door, which she had perceived was the same she formerly observed. Having here listened to his departing steps till their faint sound was lost in distance, she ventured to her apartment, and, securing it, once again retired to her bed, leaving the lamp burning on the hearth.

The grey of morning had long dawned through her casements before Emily closed her eyes in sleep; when wearied nature at length yielded her a respite from suffering.

Emily remained in her chamber on the following morning, without any notice from Montoni, or seeing a human being, except the armed men who sometimes passed on the terrace below. Having tasted no food since the dinner of the preceding day, extreme faintness made her feel the necessity of quitting the asylum of her apartment to obtain refreshment, and she was also very anxious to procure liberty for Annette.

It was near noon before she ventured from her apartment, and went first to the south gallery, whither she passed without meeting a single person or hearing a sound, except now and then the echo of a distant footstep.

It was unnecessary to call Annette, whose lamentations were audible upon the first approach to the gallery, and who, bewailing her own and Ludovico's fate, told Emily that she should certainly be starved to death if she was not let out immediately. Emily replied that she was going to beg her release of Montoni: but the terrors of hunger now yielded to those of the signor; and when Emily left her, she was loudly entreating that her place of refuge might be concealed from him.

As Emily drew near the great hall, the sounds she heard and

he people she met in the passage renewed her alarm. The latter, however, were peaceable, and did not interrupt her, though hey looked earnestly at her as she passed, and sometimes poke. On crossing the hall towards the cedar room, where Montoni usually sat, she perceived on the pavement fragments of swords, some tattered garments stained with blood, and almost expected to have seen among them a dead body; but rom such a spectacle she was at present spared. As she pproached the room, the sound of several voices issued from within, and a dread of appearing before many strangers, as well as of irrating Montoni by such an intrusion, made her pause and falter from her purpose. She looked up through the ong arcades of the hall, in search of a servant who might bear message: but none appeared, and the urgency of what she had to request made her still linger near the door. The voices within were not in contention, though she distinguished those of several of the guests of the preceding day; but still her reso- ution failed whenever she would have tapped at the door, and she had determined to walk in the hall till some person should appear who might call Montoni from the room; when, as she turned from the door it was suddenly opened by himself. Emily trembled and was confused, while he almost started with surprise, and all the terrors of his countenance unfolded them- selves. She forgot all she would have said, and neither inquired for her aunt, nor entreated for Annette, but stood silent and embarrassed.

After closing the door, he reproved her for a meanness of which she had not been guilty, and sternly questioned her what he had overheard; an accusation which revived her recollection so far, that she assured him she had not come thither with an intention to listen to his conversation, but to entreat his com- passion for her aunt and for Annette. Montoni seemed to doubt this assertion, for he regarded her with a scrutinizing look; and the doubt evidently arose from no trifling interest. Emily then further explained herself, and concluded with entreating him to inform her where her aunt was placed, and to permit that she might visit her; but he looked upon her only

with a malignant smile, which instantaneously confirmed her worst fears for her aunt, and at that moment she had not courage to renew her entreaties.

"For Annette," said he—"if you go to Carlo, he will release the girl; the foolish fellow who shut her up, died yesterday."

Emily shuddered. "But my aunt, signor," said she, "oh, tell me of my aunt!"

"She is taken care of," replied Montoni hastily; "I have no time to answer idle questions."

He would have passed on; but Emily, in a voice of agony that could not be wholly resisted, conjured him to tell her where Madame Montoni was; while he paused, and she anxiously watched his countenance, a trumpet sounded, and in the next moment she heard the heavy gates of the portal open, and then the clattering of horses's hoofs in the court, with the confusion of many voices. She stood for a moment hesitating whether she should follow Montoni, who at the sound of the trumpet had passed through the hall; and turning her eyes whence it came, she saw, through the door that opened beyond a long perspective of arches into the courts, a party of horsemen, whom she judged, as well as the distance and her embarrassment would allow, to be the same she had seen depart a few days before. But she stayed not to scrutinize; for when the trumpet sounded again, the chevaliers rushed out of the cedar room, and men came running into the hall from every quarter of the castle. Emily once more hurried for shelter to her own apartment. Thither she was still pursued by images of horror. Tears refused any longer to relieve her distress; and she had sat for a considerable time absorbed in thought, when a knocking at the chamber door roused her, on opening which she found old Carlo.

"Dear young lady," said he, "I have been so flurried I never once thought of you till just now: I have brought you some fruit and wine, and I am sure you must stand in need of them by this time."

"Thank you, Carlo," said Emily; "this is very good of you. Did the signor remind you of me?"

"No, signora," replied Carlo, "his *Excellenza* has business nough on his hands." Emily then renewed her inquiries conerning Madame Montoni; but Carlo had been employed at ne other end of the castle during the time that she was reioved, and he had heard nothing since concerning her.

To several questions concerning the contentions of yesterday e gave very limited answers; but told that the disputes were ow amicably settled, and that the signor believed himself to ave been mistaken in his suspicions of his guests. "The fighting vas about that, signora," said Carlo; "but I trust I shall never ee such another day in this castle, though strange things are bout to be done."

She then desired him to release Annette; and having described he chamber in which the poor girl was confined, he promised o obey her immediately, and was departing, when she remembered to ask who were the persons just arrived. Her late onjecture was right; it was Verezzi, with his party.

An hour passed before Annette appeared, who then came veeping and sobbing:"O Ludovico, Ludovico !" cried she.

"You will meet Ludovico in a better world I hope," said Emily.

"Yes—yes—ma'amselle," sobbed Annette; "but hope I shall neet him again in this—though he is so wounded !"

"Wounded !" exclaimed Emily; "does he live ?"

"Yes, ma'am, but—but he has a terrible wound, and could ot come to let me out. They thought him dead at first, and e has not been rightly himself till within this hour."

"Well, Annette, I rejoice to hear he lives."

"Lives ! Holy Saints ! why he will not die, surely !"

Annette's grief was now somewhat assuaged, and Emily ent her to make inquiries concerning her lady, of whom, howver, she could obtain no intelligence.

This day passed with Emily in continued grief and anxiety or her aunt; but she was unmolested by any notice from Mononi; and now that Annette was liberated, she obtained food vithout exposing herself to danger or impertinence.

Two following days passed in the same manner, unmarked

by any occurrence, during which she obtained no information of Madame Montoni. On the evening of the second, having dismissed Annette and retired to bed, she rose from her bed, and went to one of the casements of her chamber to breathe a freer air.

All without was silent and dark, unless that could be called light which was only the faint glimmer of the stars, showing imperfectly the outline of the mountains, the western towers of the castle, and the ramparts below where a solitary sentinel was pacing.

While she raised her streaming eyes to heaven, she observed the same planet which she had seen in Languedoc, on the night preceding her father's death, rise above the eastern towers of the castle; remembered also the solemn music she had heard, and to which the tenderness of her spirit had, in spite of her reason, given a superstitious meaning. At these recollections she continued musing; when suddenly the notes of sweet music passed on the air. A superstitious dread stole over her; she stood listening for some moments in trembling expectation, and then endeavoured to re-collect her thoughts, and to reason herself into composure: but human reason cannot establish her laws on subjects lost in the obscurity of imagination, any more than the eye can ascertain the form of objects that only glimmer through the dimness of night.

Her surprise on hearing such soothing and delicious sounds, was at least justifiable; for it was long, very long, since she had listened to anything like melody. The fierce trumpet and the shrill fife were the only instruments she had heard since her arrival at Udolpho.

When her mind was somewhat more composed, she tried to ascertain from what quarter the sounds proceeded, and thought they came from below; but whether from a room of the castle, or from the terrace, she could not with certainty judge. Fear and surprise now yielded to the enchantment of a strain that floated on the silent night with the most soft and melancholy sweetness. Suddenly it seemed removed to a distance, trembled faintly, and then entirely ceased.

She continued to listen, sunk in that pleasing repose which
ft music leaves on the mind—but it came no more. Upon
is strange circumstance her thoughts were long engaged;
r strange it certainly was to hear music at midnight, when
ery inhabitant of the castle had long since retired to rest,
d in a place where nothing like harmony had been heard
fore, probably for many years. Long suffering had made
r spirits peculiarly sensible to terror, and liable to be affected
the illusions of superstition. Yet reason told her that this
as a wild conjecture, and she was inclined to dismiss it; but,
th the inconsistency so natural when imagination guides
e thoughts, she then wavered towards a belief as wild. She
nembered the singular event connected with the castle, which
d given it into the possession of its present owner; and when
e considered the mysterious manner in which its late pos-
ssor had disappeared, and that she had never since been
ard of, her mind was impressed with a high degree of solemn
ve; so that, though there appeared no clue to connect that
ent with the late music, she had inclined fancifully to think
ey had some relation to each other. At this conjecture, a
dden chillness ran through her frame; she looked fearfully
on the duskiness of her chamber, and the dead silence that
evailed there heightened to her fancy its gloomy aspect.
At length she left the casement; but her steps faltered as she
proached the bed, and she stopped and looked round. The
ngle lamp that burned in her spacious chamber was expiring;
r a moment she shrunk from the darkness beyond; and then,
hamed of the weakness, which, however, she could not
nolly conquer, went forward to the bed, where her mind did
t soon know the soothings of sleep. She still mused on the
e occurrence, and looked with anxiety to the next night,
nen at the same hour she determined to watch whether the
usic returned. "If these sounds were human," said she, "I shall
obably hear them again."

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CHAPTER XIII

Annette came almost breathless to Emily's apartment in the morning. "Oh, ma'amselle!" said she in broken sentences "what news I have to tell!" I have found out who the prisoner is—but he was no prisoner either;—he that was shut up in the chamber I told you of. I must think him a ghost forsooth!"

"Who is the person, then?"

"Nay, ma'amselle, guess—guess who it was; it was somebody you know very well."

"I cannot guess," said Emily impatiently.

"Nay, ma'amselle, I'll tell you something to guess by—A tall signor, with a longish face, who walks so stately, and used to wear such a high feather in his hat; and used often to look down upon the ground when people spoke to him; and to look at people from under his eyebrows, as it were, all so dark and frowning. You have seen him often and often at Venice, ma'am. Then he was so intimate with the signor, too. And, now I think of it, I wonder what he could be afraid of in this lonely old castle, that he shut himself up for. But he is come abroad now, for I met him on the rampart just this minute. I trembled when I saw him, for I always was afraid of him, somehow; but I determined I would not let him see it; so I went up to him and made him a low curtsy: 'You are welcome to the castle, Signor Orsini,' said I."

"Oh, it was Signor Orsini, then!" said Emily.

"Yes, ma'amselle; but if that was all, this desolate place would conceal him, without his shutting himself up in one room. Who would think of coming to look for him here? I am sure I should as soon think of going to look for anybody in the world."

Emily leaned her head upon her hand, and was for some time silent: then telling Annette she wished to be alone, the latter left the room.

When Annette returned, a few hours after, she told Emily that the porter of the castle wished very much to speak with her, for that he had something of importance to say: her spirits

d, however, of late been so subject to alarm, that any new cumstance excited it; and this message from the porter, when r first surprise was over, made her look round for some king danger—the more suspiciously, perhaps, because she d frequently remarked the unpleasant air and countenance this man.

"I will speak to him, Annette," said she: "desire him to come the corridor immediately."

Annette departed, and soon after returned.

"Barnardine, ma'amselle," said she, "dare not come to the rridor, lest he should be discovered, it is so far from his post; d he dare not even leave the gates for a moment now: but if u will come to him at the portal, through some roundabout ssages he told me of, without crossing the courts, he has that tell which will surprise you: but you must not come through e courts, lest the signor should see you."

Emily, neither approving these roundabout passages nor the ner part of the request, now positively refused to go. "Tell n," said she, "if he has anything of consequence to impart, I ll hear him in the corridor, whenever he has an opportunity coming thither."

Annette went to deliver this message, and was absent a nsiderable time. When she returned—"It won't do, ma'amle," said she: "Barnardine has been considering, all this time, nat can be done; for it is as much as his place is worth to ve his post now; but if you will come to the east rampart the dusk of the evening, he can, perhaps, steal away and l you all be has to say."

Emily was surprised and alarmed at the secrecy which this an seemed to think so necessary, and hesitated whether to eet him—till, considering that he might mean to warn her some serious danger, she resolved to go.

"Soon after sunset," said she, " I will be at the end of the st rampart. But then the watch will be set," she added recolting herself; "and how can Barnardine pass unobserved ?"

"That is just what I said to him, ma'am: and he answered e, that he had the key of the gate at the end of the rampart,

that leads towards the courts, and could let himself through that way; and as for the sentinels, there were none at this end of the terrace, because the place is guarded enough by the high walls of the castle and the east turret: and he said, those at the other end were too far off to see him, if it was pretty duskyish.

"Well," said Emily, "I must hear what he has to tell; and therefore desire you will go with me to the terrace this evening."

"He desired it might be pretty duskyish, ma'amselle," repeated Annette, "because of the watch."

Emily paused; and then said she would be on the terrace at hour after sunset;—"and tell Barnardine," she added, "to be punctual to the time; for that I, also, may be observed by Signor Montoni.—Where is the signor? I would speak with him."

"He is in the cedar chamber, ma'am, counseling with the other signors. He is going to give them a sort of treat to-day to make up for what passed at the last, I suppose; the people are all very busy in the kitchen."

Emily now inquired if Montoni expected any new guests and Annette believed that he did not. "Poor Ludovico!" added she: "he would be as merry as the best of them, if he was well. But he may recover yet: Count Morano was wounded as bad as he, and he is got well again, and is gone back to Venice."

"Is he so" said Emily; "when did you hear this?"

"I heard it last night, ma'amselle; but I forgot to tell it."

Emily asked some further questions; and then desiring Annette would observe, and inform her when Montoni was alone, the girl went to deliver her message to Barnardine.

Montoni was however so much engaged during the whole day, that Emily had no opportunity of seeking a release from her terrible suspense concerning her aunt. Annette was employed in watching his steps, and in attending upon Ludovico whom she, assisted by Caterina, nursed with the utmost care and Emily was of course left much alone.

As the hour of appointment drew near, her impatience

ıcreased. At length the sun set: she heard the passing steps of ıe sentinels going to their posts, and waited only for Annette ɔ accompany her to the terrace; who soon after came, and ıey descended together. When Emily expressed apprehensions f meeting Montoni or some of his guests—"Oh ! there is no ear of that, ma'amselle," said Annette; "they are all set in to easting yet; and that Barnardine knows."

They reached the first terrace, where the sentinels demanded vho passed; and Emily having answered, walked on to the ast rampart; at the entrance of which they were again stopped; nd having again replied, were permitted to proceed. But Emily did not like to expose herself to the discretion of these ıen at such an hour; and impatient to withdraw from the ituation, she stepped hastily on in search of Barnardine. He vas not yet come. She leaned pensively on the wall of the ampart, and waited for him. The gloom of twilight sat deep n the surrounding objects, blending in soft confusion the alley, the mountains, and the woods, whose tall heads stirred y the evening breeze gave the only sounds that stole on the ilence—except a faint, faint chorus of distant voices that arose rom within the castle.

"What voices are those ?" said Emily as she fearfully listened.

"It is only the signor and his guests carousing," replied Annette.

"Good God !" thought Emily, "can this man's heart be so ay when he has made another being so wretched ?"

She looked up with a sensation of horror to the east turret, ear which she then stood. A light glimmered through the rates of the lower chamber, but those of the upper one were ark. Presently she perceived a person moving with a lamp cross the lower room: but this circumstances revived no hope oncerning Madame Montoni, whom she had vainly sought in hat apartment, which had appeared to contain only soldiers' ccoutrements: Emily, however, determined to attempt the uter door of the turret as soon as Barnardine should withdraw; nd, if it was unfastened, to make another effort to discover er aunt.

The moments passed, but still Barnardine did not appear; and Emily, becoming uneasy, hesitated whether to wait any longer. She would have sent Annette to the portal to hasten him, but feared to be left alone: for it was now almost dark, and a melancholy streak of red, that still lingered in the west, was the only vestige of departed day. The strong interest, however, which Barnardine's message had awakened, overcame other apprehensions, and still detained her.

While she was conjecturing with Annette what could thus occasion his absence, they heard a key turn in the lock of the gate near them, and presently saw a man advancing. It was Barnardine; of whom Emily hastily inquired what he had to communicate, and desired that he would tell her quickly—"for I am chilled with this evening air," said she.

"You must dismiss your maid, lady," said the man in a voice the deep tone of which shocked her: "what I have to tell is to you only."

Emily, after some hesitation, desired Annette to withdraw to a little distance.—"Now, my friend, what would you say ?"

He was silent a moment, as if considering; and then said: "That which would cost me my place, at least, if it came to the signor's ears. You must promise, lady, that nothing shall ever make you tell a syllable of the matter. I have been trusted in this affair; and if it was known that I betrayed my trust, my life perhaps might answer it; but I was concerned for you, lady; and I resolved to tell you." He paused.

Emily thanked him; assured him that he might repose on her discretion; and entreated him to dispatch.

"Annette told us in the hall how unhappy you was about Signora Montoni, and how much you wished to know what was become of her."

"Most true," said Emily eagerly: "and you can inform me ? I conjure you tell me the worst without hesitation." She rested her trembling arm upon the wall.

"I *can* tell you," resumed Barnardine;—"but——"

"But what ?" exclaimed Emily, recovering her resolution.

"Here I am, ma'amselle," said Annette; who having heard e eager tone in which Emily pronounced these words, came nning towards her.

"Retire!" said Barnardine sternly: "you are not wanted": ıd as Emily said nothing, Annette obeyed.

"I *can* tell you," repeated the porter;—"but I know not how: you was afflicted before——"

"I am prepared for the worst, my friend," said Emily in a rm and solemn voice; "I can support any certainty better than is suspense."

"Well, signora, if that is the case, you shall hear.—You ıow, I suppose, that the signor and his lady used sometimes disagree. It is none of my concern to inquire what it was ɔout; but I believe you know it was so."

"Well," said Emily, "proceed."

"The signor, it seems, had lately been very wroth against r. I saw all, and heard all—a great deal more than people ought for;—but it was none of my business, so I said nothing. few days ago, the signor sent for me. 'Barnardine,' says he, ou are—an honest man: I think I can trust you.' I assured s *Excellenza* that he could. 'Then,' says he—as near as I can member—'I have an affair in hand which I want you to assist e in.' Then he told me what I was to do; but that I shall say ɔthing about—it concerned only the signora."

"O heavens!" exclaimed Emily—"what have you done?"

Barnardine hesitated, and was silent.

"It was a fiend," said Barnardine in a gloomy tone of voice. ıey were now both silent: Emily had no courage to inquire rther, and Barnardine seemed to shrink from telling more. t length he said, "It is of no use to think of the past. The signor as cruel enough, but he would be obeyed. What signified my fusing? He would have found others who had no scruple."

"You have murdered her, then!" said Emily in a hollow and ward voice—"I am talking with a murderer!" Barnardine ɔod silent; while Emily turned from him, and attempted to ave the place.

"Stay, lady!" said he. "You deserve to think so still—since you can believe me capable of such a deed."

"If you are innocent, tell me quickly," said Emily in faint accents; "for I feel I shall not be able to hear you long."

"I will tell you no more," said he, and walked away. Emily had just strength enough to bid him stay, and then to call Annette; on whose arm she leaned, and they walked slowly up the rampart till they heard steps behind them. It was Barnardine again.

"Send away the girl," said he, "and I will tell you more."

"She must not go," said Emily: "what you have to say she may hear."

"May she so, lady?" said he. "You shall know no more, then"; and he was going, though slowly: when Emily's anxiety overcoming the resentment and fear which the man's behaviour had roused, she desired him to stay, and bade Annette retire.

"The signora is alive," said he, "for me. She is my prisoner, though: his *Excellenza* has shut her up in the chamber over the great gates of the court, and I have the charge of her. I was going to have told you you might see her—but now——"

Emily, relieved from an unutterable load of anguish by this speech, had now only to ask Barnardine's forgiveness, and to conjure that he would let her visit her aunt.

He complied with less reluctance than she expected; and told her that if she would repair on the following night, when the signor was retired to rest, to the postern gate of the castle, she should perhaps see Madame Montoni.

Amid all the thankfulness which Emily felt for this concession, she thought she observed a malicious triumph in his manner when he pronounced the last words; but in the next moment she dismissed the thought; and, having again thanked him, commended her aunt to his pity, and assured him that she herself would reward him, and would be punctual to her appointment, she bade him good night, and retired, unobserved, to her chamber.

She distinguished, till a late hour, the distant carousals of Montoni and his companions—the loud contest, the dissolute

ugh, and the choral song, that made the halls re-echo. At ngth she heard the heavy gates of the castle shut for the ght, and those sounds instantly sunk into a silence which was sturbed only by the whispering steps of persons, passing rough the galleries to their remote rooms. Emily now, judging to be about the time when she had heard the music on the receding night, dismissed Annette, and gently opened the asement to watch for its return. The planet she had so partiularly noticed, at the recurrence of the music, was not yet sen; but with superstitious weakness she kept her eyes fixed n that part of the hemisphere where it would rise, almost xpecting that, when it appeared, the sounds would return. At ngth it came, serenely bright, over the eastern towers of the astle. Her heart trembled when she perceived it; and she had arcely courage to remain at the casement, lest the returning usic should confirm her terror, and subdue the little strength e yet retained. The clock soon after struck one; and knowing is to be about the time when the sounds had occurred, she sat own in a chair near the casement, and endeavoured to comose her spirits; but the anxiety of expectation yet disturbed em. Everything, however, remained still: she heard only the olitary step of a sentinel, and the lulling murmur of the woods elow: and she again leaned from the casement, and again ooked, as if for intelligence, to the planet, which was now sen high above the towers.

Emily continued to listen—but no music came. "Those were rely no mortal sounds !" said she, recollecting their entrancing elody: "no inhabitant of this castle could utter such: and here is the feeling that could modulate such exquisite expreson ?" Thus passed the hour in watchfulness and solemn ought—but no sounds returned; and, after remaining at the asement till the light tint of dawn began to edge the mountainops, and steal upon the night shade, she concluded that they ould not return, and retired reluctantly to repose.

Emily was somewhat surprised, on the following day, to nd that Annette had heard of Madame Montoni's confineent in the chamber over the portal, as well as of her purposed

visit there on the approaching night. That the circumstance which Barnardine had so solemnly enjoined her to conceal, he had himself told to so indiscreet a hearer as Annette appeared very improbable, though he had now charged her with a message concerning the intended interview. He requested that Emily would meet him, unattended, on the terrace at a little after midnight, when he himself would lead her to the place he had promised; a proposal from which she immediately shrunk, for a thousand vague fears darted athwart her mind, such as had tormented her on the preceding night, and which she neither knew how to trust nor to dismiss. It frequently occurred to her, that Barnardine might have deceived her concerning Madame Montoni, whose murderer, perhaps, he really was; and that he had deceived her by order of Montoni, the more easily to draw her into some of the desperate designs of the latter. The terrible suspicion that Madame Montoni no longer lived, thus came accompanied by one not less dreadful for herself. Unless the crime by which the aunt had suffered was instigated merely by resentment, unconnected with profit, a motive upon which Montoni did not appear very likely to act, its object must be unattained till the niece was also dead, to whom Montoni knew that his wife's estates must descend. Emily remembered that the contested estates in France would devolve to her if Madame Montoni died without consigning them to her husband: and the former obstinate perseverance of her aunt made it too probable that she had to the last withheld them. At this instant recollecting Barnardine's manner on the preceding night, she now believed what she then had fancied that it expressed malignant triumph. She shuddered at the recollection which confirmed her fears, and determined not to meet him on the terrace.

"Yet how is it possible, Annette, I can pass to the terrace at that hour?" said she, recollecting herself; "the sentinels will stop me, and Signor Montoni will hear of the affair."

"Oh, ma'amselle! that is well thought of," replied Annette. "That is what Barnardine told me about. He gave me this key, and bade me say it unlocks the door at the end of the

aulted gallery that opens near the end of the east rampart, o that you need not pass any of the men on watch. He bade ie say too, that his reason for requesting you to come to the errace was because he could take you to the place you want o go to without opening the great doors of the hall, which rate so heavily."

Emily's spirits were somewhat calmed by this explanation, hich seemed to be honestly given to Annette. "But why did e desire I would come alone, Annette ?" said she.

"Why, that was what I asked him myself, ma'amselle. But e said, 'No—no—I tell you not,' in his gruff way. Now what an be the reason of this ? But I know, you know, ma'am, who ou are going to see."

"Pray did Barnardine tell you this ?"

"He ! No, ma'amselle, that he did not."

Emily inquired who did; but Annette showed that she could eep a secret.

During the remainder of the day Emily's mind was agitated ith doubts and fears and contrary determinations. Pity for er aunt, and anxiety for herself, alternately swayed her deter- ination, and night came before she had decided upon her onduct. She heard the castle clock strike eleven—twelve—and et her mind wavered. The time, however, was now come hen she could hesitate no longer: and then the interest she elt for her aunt overcame other considerations; and bidding nnette follow her to the outer door of the vaulted gallery, nd there await her return she descended from her chamber. he castle was perfectly still; and the great hall, where so ately she had witnessed a scene of dreadful contention, now eturned only the whispering footsteps of the two solitary gures gliding fearfully between the pillars, and gleamed only o the feeble lamp they carried. Emily, deceived by the long adows of the pillars and by the catching lights between, ften stopped, imagining she saw some person moving in the istant obscurity of the perspective; and as she passed these illars, she feared to turn her eyes towards them, almost xpecting to see a figure start out from behind their broad

shaft. She reached, however, the vaulted gallery without interruption, but unclosed its outer door with a trembling hand; and charging Annette not to quit it, and to keep it a little open, that she might be heard if she called, she delivered to her the lamp, which she did not dare to take herself, because of the men on watch, and, alone, stepped out upon the dark terrace. Everything was so still, that she feared lest her own light steps should be heard by the distant sentinels; and she walked cautiously towards the spot where she had before met Barnardine, listening for a sound, and looking onward through the gloom in search of him. At length she was startled by a deep voice that spoke near her, and she paused, uncertain whether it was his, till it spoke again, and she then recognized the hollow tones of Barnardine, who had been punctual to the moment, and was at the appointed place resting on the rampart wall. After chiding her for not coming sooner, and saying that he had been waiting nearly half an hour, he desired Emily, who made no reply, to follow him to the door through which he had entered the terrace.

While he unlocked it, she looked back to that she had left, and observing the rays of the lamp stream through a small opening, was certain that Annette was still there. But her remote situation could little befriend Emily, after she had quitted the terrace; and when Barnardine unclosed the gate, the dismal aspect of the passage beyond, shown by a torch burning on the pavement, made her shrink from following him alone, and she refused to go, unless Annette might accompany her. This, however, Barnardine absolutely refused to permit.

He then took up the torch, and led her along the passage, at the extremity of which he unlocked another door, whence they descended a few steps into a chapel, which, as Barnardine held up the torch to light her, Emily observed to be in ruins; and she immediately recollected a former conversation of Annette concerning it, with very unpleasant emotions. She looked fearfully on the almost roofless walls green with damps, and on the Gothic points of the windows, where the ivy and the bryony had long supplied the place of glass, and ran mantling

nong the broken capitals of some columns that had once pported the roof. Barnardine stumbled over the broken vement, and his voice, as he uttered a sudden oath, was turned in hollow echoes that made it more terrific. Emily's art sank; but she still followed him, and he turned out of hat had been the principal aisle of the chapel. "Down these eps, lady," said Barnardine, as he descended a flight which peared to lead into the vaults; but Emily paused on the top, d demanded in a tremulous tone whither he was conducting r.

"To the portal," said Barnardine.

"Cannot we go through the chapel to the portal?" said nily.

"No, signora, that leads to the inner court, which I don't oose to unlock. This way, and we shall reach the outer court esently."

Emily still hesitated; fearing not only to go on, but, since e had gone thus far, to irritate Barnardine by refusing to go rther.

"Come, lady," said the man, who had nearly reached the ttom of the flight, "make a little haste; I cannot wait here night."

"Whither do these steps lead?" said Emily, yet pausing.

"To the portal," repeated Barnardine in an angry tone; will wait no longer." As he said this, he moved on with the ght: and Emily, fearing to provoke him by further delay, luctantly followed. From the steps they proceeded through passage adjoining the vaults, the walls of which were dropping ith unwholesome dews, and the vapours that crept along the ound made the torch burn so dimly, that Emily expected ery moment to see it extinguished; and Barnardine could arce find his way. As they advanced, these vapours thickened; d Barnardine, believing the torch expiring, stopped for a oment to trim it. As he then rested against a pair of iron tes that opened from the passage, Emily saw by uncertain ashes of light the vaults beyond, and near her heaps of earth at seemed to surround an open grave. Such an object in such

a scene would at any time have disturbed her; but now she was shocked by an instantaneous presentiment that this was the grave of her unfortunate aunt, and that the treacherous Barnardine was leading herself to destruction. The obscure and terrible place to which he had conducted her seemed to justify the thought; it was a place suited for murder, a receptacle for the dead, where a deed of horror might be committed, and no vestige appear to proclaim it. Emily was so overwhelmed with terror, that for a moment she was unable to determine what conduct to pursue. She then considered that it would be vain to attempt an escape from Barnardine by flight, since the length and intricacy of the way she had passed would soon enable him, who was acquainted with the turnings, to overtake her, and whose feebleness would not suffer her to run long with swiftness. She feared equally to irritate him by a disclosure of her suspicions, which a refusal to accompany him further certainly would do; and since she was already as much in his power as it was possible she could be, if she proceeded, she at length determined to suppress, as far as she could, the appearance of apprehension, and to follow silently whither he designed to lead her. Pale with horror and anxiety, she now waited till Barnardine had trimmed the torch; and as her sight glanced again upon the grave, she could not forbear inquiring for whom it was prepared. He took his eyes from the torch, and fixed them upon her face without speaking. She faintly repeated the question; but the man, shaking the torch, passed on: and she followed, trembling, to a second flight of steps, having ascended which, a door delivered them into the first court of the castle. As they crossed it, the light showed the high black walls around them, fringed with long grass and dank weeds that found a scanty soil among the mouldering stones; the heavy buttresses, with here and there between them a narrow grate, that admitted a freer circulation of air to the court; the massy iron gates that led to the castle, whose clustering turrets appeared above; and, opposite, the huge towers and arch of the portal itself. In this scene, the large uncouth person of Barnardine bearing the torch formed a characteristic figure. This Barnar-

ine was wrapt in a long dark cloak, which scarcely allowed
ie kind of half-boots, or sandals, that were laced upon his
gs, to appear, and showed only the point of a broadsword,
hich he usually wore, slung in a belt across his shoulders.
n his head was a heavy flat velvet cap, somewhat resembling
turban, in which was a short feather; the visage beneath it
owed strong features, and a countenance furrowed with the
nes of cunning and darkened by habitual discontent.

The view of the court, however, reanimated Emily, who, as
ie crossed silently towards the portal, began to hope that her
wn fears, and not the treachery of Barnardine, had deceived
er. She looked anxiously up at the first casement, that
ppeared above the lofty arch of the portcullis; but it was
ark, and she inquired whether it belonged to the chamber
here Madame Montoni was confined. Emily spoke low, and
arnardine perhaps did not hear her question, for he returned
o answer; and they soon after entered the postern door of the
ateway, which brought them to the foot of a narrow stair-
ase that wound up one of the towers.

"Up the staircase the signora lies," said Barnardine.

"Lies!" repeated Emily faintly, as she began to ascend.

"She lies in the upper chamber," said Barnardine.

As they passed up, the wind, which poured through the
arrow cavities in the wall, made the torch flare, and it threw
stronger gleam upon the grim and sallow countenance of
arnardine, and discovered more fully the desolation of the
lace—the rough stone walls, the spiral stairs black with age,
nd a suit of ancient armour, with an iron visor, that hung
pon the walls, and appeared a trophy of some former victory.

Having reached a landing-place, "You may wait here, lady,"
id he, applying a key to the door of a chamber, "while I go
p and tell the signora you are coming."

"That ceremony is unnecessary," replied Emily; "my aunt
ill rejoice to see me."

"I am not sure of that," said Barnardine, pointing to the
oom he had opened; "come in here, lady, while I step up."

Emily, surprised and somewhat shocked, did not dare to

oppose him further; but, as he was turning away with the torch, desired he would not leave her in darkness. He looked around, and, observing a tripod lamp that stood on the stairs, lighted and gave it to Emily, who stepped forward into a large old chamber, and he closed the door. As she listened anxiously to his departing steps, she thought he descended, instead of ascended, the stairs: but the gusts of wind that whistled round the portal would not allow her to hear distinctly any other sound. Still, however, she listened, and perceiving no step in the room above, where he had affirmed Madame Montoni to be, her anxiety increased, though she considered that the thickness of the floor in this strong building might prevent any sound reaching her from the upper chamber. The next moment, in a pause of the wind, she distinguished Barnardine's step descending to the court, and then thought she heard his voice; but the rising gust again overcoming other sounds, Emily, to be certain on this point, moved softly to the door, which, on attempting to open it, she discovered was fastened. All the horrid apprehensions that had lately assailed her, returned at this instant with redoubled force; and no longer appeared like the exaggerations of a timid spirit, but seemed to have been sent to warn of her fate. She now did not doubt that Madame Montoni had been murdered, perhaps in this very chamber; or that she herself was brought hither for the same purpose. The countenance, the manners, and the recollected words of Barnardine when he had spoken of her aunt, confirmed her worst fears. For some moments she was incapable of considering of any means by which she might attempt an escape. Still she listened, but heard footsteps neither on the stairs nor in the room above; she thought, however, that she again distinguished Barnardine's voice below, and went to a grated window, that opened upon the court, to inquire further. Here she plainly heard his hoarse accents mingling with the blast that swept by, but they were lost again so quickly that their meaning could not be interpreted; and then the light of a torch, which seemed to issue from the portal below, flashed across the court, and the long shadow of a man, who was under the archway,

ppeared upon the pavement. Emily, from the hugeness of this udden portrait, concluded it to be that of Barnardine; but ther deep tones which passed in the wind soon convinced her e was not alone, and that his companion was not a person ery liable to pity.

When her spirits had overcome the first shock of her tuation, she held up the lamp to examine if the chamber fforded a possibility of an escape. It was a spacious room, hose walls, wainscoted with rough oak, showed no casement ut the grated one which Emily had left, and no other door nan that by which she had entered. The feeble rays of the amp, however, did not allow her to see at once its full extent; ne perceived no furniture, except, indeed, an iron chair astened in the centre of the chamber, immediately over which, epending on a chain from the ceiling, hung an iron ring. Having gazed upon these for some time with wonder and orror, she next observed iron bars below, made for the purpose f confining the feet, and on the arms of the chair were rings f the same metal. As she continued to survey them, she con- luded that they were instruments of torture; and it struck er that some poor wretch had once been fastened in this hair, and had there been starved to death. She was chilled y the thought; but what was her agony when, in the next ioment, it occurred to her that her aunt might have been one f these victims, and that she herself might be the next! An cute pain seized her head, she was scarcely able to hold the amp; and, looking round for support, was seating herself, nconsciously, in the iron chair itself: but suddenly perceiving here she was, she started from it in horror, and sprung owards a remote end of the room. Here again she looked ound for a seat to sustain her, and perceived only a dark urtain, which, descending from the ceiling to the floor, was rawn along the whole side of the chamber. Ill as she was, the ppearance of this curtain struck her, and she paused to gaze pon it in wonder and apprehension.

It seemed to conceal a recess of the chamber; she wished, et dreaded, to lift it, and to discover what it veiled; twice

she was withheld by a recollection of the terrible spectacle her daring hand had formerly unveiled in an apartment of the castle, till, suddenly conjecturing that it concealed the body of her murdered aunt, she seized it in a fit of desperation, and drew it aside. Beyond appeared a corpse stretched on a kind of low couch, which was crimsoned with human blood, as was the floor beneath. The features, deformed by death, were ghastly and horrible, and more than one livid wound appeared in the face. Emily, bending over the body, gazed, for a moment, with an eager, frenzied eye; but, in the next, the lamp dropped from her hand, and she fell senseless at the foot of the couch.

When her senses returned, she found herself surrrounded by men, among whom was Barnardine, who were lifting her from the floor, and then bore her along the chamber. She was sensible of what passed; but the extreme languor of her spirits did not permit her to speak, or move, or even to feel any distinct fear. They carried her down the staircase by which she had ascended; when having reached the archway they stopped, and one of the men, taking the torch from Barnardine, opened a small door that was cut in the great gate, and as he stepped out upon the road, the light he bore showed several men on horseback in waiting. Whether it was the freshness of the air that revived Emily, or that the objects she now saw roused the spirit of alarm, she suddenly spoke, and made an ineffectual effort to disengage herself from the grasp of the ruffians who held her.

Barnardine, meanwhile, called loudly for the torch, while distant voices answered, and in the same instant a light flashed upon the court of the castle. Again he vociferated for the torch, and the men hurried Emily through the gate. At a short distance, under the shelter of the castle walls, she perceived the fellow who had taken the light from the porter, holding it to a man busily employed in altering the saddle of a horse, round which were several horsemen looking on, whose harsh features received the full glare of the torch; while the broken ground beneath them, the opposite walls, with the tufted shrubs that overhung their summits, and an embattled watch-tower above,

ere reddened with the gleam, which fading gradually away, ft the remoter ramparts, and the woods below to the obscurity f night.

"What do you waste time for, there ?" said Barnardine with n oath, as he approached the horsemen. "Dispatch—dispatch !"

"The saddle will be ready in a minute," replied the man who as buckling it, at whom Barnardine now swore again for his egligence; and Emily, calling feebly for help, was hurried owards the horses, while the ruffians disputed on which to lace her, the one designed for her not being ready. At this ioment a cluster of lights issued from the great gates, and she nmediately heard the shrill voice of Annette above those of everal other persons who advanced. In the same moment she istinguished Montoni and Cavigni, followed by a number of uffian-faced fellows, to whom she no longer looked with terror, ut with hope; for at this instant she did not tremble at the nought of any dangers that might await her within the castle, hence so lately, and so anxiously, she had wished to escape. hose which threatened her from without had engrossed all er apprehensions.

A short contest ensued between the parties, in which that f Montoni, however, were presently victors; and the horsemen, erceiving that numbers were against them, and being, perhaps, ot very warmly interested in the affair they had undertaken, alloped off, while Barnardine had run far enough to be lost n the darkness, and Emily was led back into the castle. As she e-passed the courts, the remembrance of what she had seen n the portal-chamber came with all its horror to her mind; nd when, soon after, she heard the gate close that shut her nce more within the castle walls, she shuddered for herself, nd, almost forgetting the danger she had escaped, could carcely think that anything less precious than liberty and eace was to be found beyond them.

Montoni ordered Emily to await him in the cedar parlour, hither he soon followed, and then sternly questioned her on is mysterious affair. Though she now viewed him with horror, s the murderer of her aunt, and scarcely knew what she said

to his impatient inquiries, her answers and her manner convinced him that she had not taken a voluntary part in the late scheme, and he dismissed her upon the appearance of his servants, whom he had ordered to attend, that he might inquire further into the affair, and discover those who had been accomplices in it.

Emily had been some time in her apartment before the tumult of her mind allowed her to remember several of the past circumstances. Then, again, the dead form which the curtain in the portal-chamber had disclosed, came to her fancy, and she uttered a groan, which terrified Annette the more, as Emily forbore to satisfy her curiosity on the subject of it.

With some difficulty Annette led her to the bed, which Emily examined with an eager, frenzied eye, before she lay down. She now wept silently and long; after which, becoming quite calm, she at length sunk to sleep, Annette having had discretion enough not to interrupt her tears. This girl, as affectionate as she was simple, lost in these moments all her fears of remaining in the chamber, and watched alone by Emily during the whole night.

CHAPTER XIV

Emily's mind was refreshed by sleep. On waking in the morning, she looked with surprise on Annette, who sat sleeping in a chair beside the bed, and then endeavoured to recollect herself; but the circumstances of the preceding night were swept from her memory, which seemed to retain no trace of what had passed, and she was still gazing with surprise on Annette, when the latter awoke.

"Oh, you have been very ill, ma'amselle,—very ill indeed! and I am sure I thought——"

"This is very strange!" said Emily, still trying to recollect the past,—"but I think I do remember that my fancy has been haunted by frightful dreams. Good God!" she added, suddenly starting, "surely it was nothing more than a dream."

She fixed a terrible look upon Anette, who, intending to

iet her, said, "Yes, ma'amselle, it was more than a dream, but is all over now."

"She *is* murdered, then !" in an inward voice, and shuddering stantaneously. Annette screamed; for being ignorant of the cumstance to which Emily referred, she attributed her manner a disordered fancy; but when she had explained to what her yn speech alluded, Emily, recollecting the attempt that had en made to carry her off, asked if the contriver of it had en discovered. Annette replied that he had not, though he ght easily be guessed at; and then told Emily she might ank her for her deliverance, who appeared calmly to listen Annette, though, in truth, she heard scarcely a word that as said.

"And so, ma'amselle," continued the latter, "I was deter-ned to be even with Barnardine for refusing to tell me the cret, by finding it out myself; so I watched you on the terrace, d as soon as he had opened the door at the end, I stole out om the castle, to try to follow you; for, says I, 'I am sure no od can be planned, or why all this secrecy ?' So, sure enough, had not bolted the door after him; and when I opened it, saw by the glimmer of the torch, at the other end of the ssage, which way you were going. I followed the light, at a stance, till you came to the vaults of the chapel, and there I as afraid to go further, for I had heard strange things about ese vaults. But then, again, I was afraid to go back, all in rkness, by myself; so by the time Barnardine had trimmed e light, I had resolved to follow you; and I did so, till you me to the great court, and there I was afraid he would see e; so I stopped at the door again, and watched you across the gates, and when you was gone up the stairs, I whipt ter. There, as I stood under the gateway, I heard horses' feet thout, and several men talking; and I heard them swearing Barnardine for not bringing you out; and just then he had e to have caught me, for he came down the stairs again, and had hardly time to get out of his way. But I had heard ough of his secret now, and I determined to be even with n, and to save you, too, ma'amselle, for I guessed it to be

some new scheme of Count Morano, though he was gone away. I ran into the castle. Luckily the signor and Signor Cavigni were up, so we had soon a train at our heels, sufficient to frighten that Barnardine and his rogues altogether."

Annette ceased to speak, but Emily still appeared to listen. At length she said suddenly, "I think I will go to him myself;—where is he ?"

Annette asked who was meant.

"Signor Montoni," replied Emily. "I would speak with him"; and Annette rose, and said she would seek him herself.

This honest girl's suspicions of Count Morano were perfectly just; Emily, too, when she thought on the scheme, had attributed it to him; and Montoni, who had not a doubt on this subject also, began to believe that it was by the direction of Morano that poison had formerly been mingled with his wine.

The porter of the castle, who had served Morano on a former occasion, willingly accepted a second bribe; and, having concerted the means of drawing Emily to the gates, Morano publicly left the hamlet, whither he had been carried after the affray, and withdrew with his people to another at several miles' distance. From thence, on a night agreed upon by Barnardine, who had discovered, from the thoughtless prattle of Annette, the most probable means of decoying Emily, the count sent back his servants to the castle, while he awaited her arrival at the hamlet, with an intention of carrying her immediately to Venice.

Annette having made her report to Montoni of Emily's health and of her request to see him, he replied that she might attend him in the cedar-room in about an hour. It was on the subject that pressed so heavily on her mind, that Emily wished to speak to him. She wished also to petition, though she scarcely dared to believe the request would be granted, that he would permit her, since her aunt was no more, to return to her native country.

While her thoughts thus wavered, a message was brought, importing that Montoni could not see her till the next day; and her spirits were then relieved for a moment from an almost

ıtolerable weight of apprehension. Annette said, she fancied
ıe chevaliers were going out to the wars again, for the court-
ard was filled with horses, and she heard that the rest of the
arty who went out before were expected at the castle. "And
heard one of the soldiers, too," added she, "say to his comrade,
ıat he would warrant they'd bring home a rare deal of
ooty."

When night returned, Emily recollected the mysterious
rains of music that she had lately heard, in which she still
elt some degree of interest, and of which she hoped to hear
gain the soothing sweetness. The influence of superstition now
ained on the weakness of her long-harassed mind; she looked
ith enthusiastic expectation to the guardian spirit of her
ather, and having dismissed Annette for the night, determined
watch alone for their return.

Thus passed the time till twelve o'clock, soon after which
ıe distant sounds that murmured through the castle ceased,
nd sleep seemed to reign over all. Emily then seated herself
t the casement, where she was soon recalled from the reverie
ıto which she sunk, by very unusual sounds, not of music, but
ke the low mourning of some person in distress. As she
stened, her heart faltered in terror, and she became convinced
ıat the former sound was more than imaginary. Still, at
ıtervals, she heard a kind of feeble lamentation, and sought
discover whence it came. There were several rooms under-
eath, adjoining the rampart, which had been long shut up;
nd as the sound probably rose frome one of these, she leaned
rom the casement to observe whether any light was visible
ıere. The chambers, as far as she could perceive, were quite
ark, but at a little distance, on the rampart below, she thought
ıe saw something move.

The faint twilight which the stars shed, did not enable her to
istinguish what it was; but she judged it to be a sentinel on
atch; and she removed her light to a remote part of the
ıamber that she might escape notice during her further
bservation.

The same object still appeared. Presently it advanced along

the rampart towards her window, and she then distinguished something like a human form; but the silence with which it moved convinced her it was no sentinel. As it drew near, she hesitated whether to retire; a thrilling curiosity inclined her to stay, but a dread of she scarcely knew what warned her to withdraw.

While she paused, the figure came opposite to her casement, and was stationary. Everything remained quiet; she had not heard even a footfall; and the solemnity of this silence, with the mysterious form she saw, subdued her spirits, so that she was moving from the casement, when, on a sudden, she observed the figure start away, and glide down the rampart, after which it was soon lost in the obscurity of night. Emily continued to gaze for some time on the way it had passed, and then retired within her chamber, musing on this strange circumstance, and scarcely doubting that she had witnessed a supernatural appearance.

Afterwards she was inclined to believe that Count Morano had obtained admittance into the castle; but she soon recollected the difficulties and dangers that must have opposed such an enterprise, and that if he had so far succeeded, to come alone and in silence to her casement at midnight, was not the conduct he would have adopted, particularly since the private staircase communicating with her apartment was known to him; neither would he have uttered the dismal sounds she had heard.

Another suggestion represented that this might be some person who had designs upon the castle; but the mournful sounds destroyed also that probability. Thus, inquiry only perplexed her. Who, or what, it could be that haunted this lonely hour, complaining in such doleful accents, she had no means of ascertaining; and imagination again assumed her empire, and roused the mysteries of superstition.

She determined, however, to watch on the following night, when her doubts might perhaps be cleared up; and she almost resolved to address the figure, if it should appear again.

On the following day Montoni sent a second excuse to Emily, who was surprised at the circumstance.

Towards evening the second part of the band which had ade the first excursion among the mountains returned to the stle. This circumstance still further confirmed her in the elief that Montoni had really commenced to be a captain of anditti, and meant to retrieve his broken fortunes by the lunder of travellers!

Emily's supposition, however natural, was in part erroneous; or she was a stranger to the state of this country, and to the rcumstances under which its frequent wars were partly conucted. The revenues of the many states of Italy being at that me insufficient to the support of standing armies, even during ne short periods which the turbulent habits both of the governents and the people permitted to pass in peace, an order of nen arose not known in our age, and but faintly described in ne history of their own. Of the soldiers disbanded at the end f every war, few returned to the safe but unprofitable occuations then usual in peace. Sometimes they passed into other ountries and mingled with armies which still kept the field. ometimes they formed themselves into bands of robbers, and ccupied remote fortresses, where their desperate character, the eakness of the governments which they offended, and the ertainty that they could be recalled to the armies when their resence should be again wanted, prevented them from being nuch pursued by the civil power; and sometimes they attached nemselves to the fortunes of a popular chief, by whom they ere led into the service of any state which could settle with im the price of their valour. From this latter practice arose neir name—*condottieri;* a term formidable all over Italy, for period which concluded in the earlier part of the seventeenth entury, but of which it is not so easy to ascertain the comnencement.

In such services the *condottieri* were eminent; and in these, here plunder always followed success, their characters cquired a mixture of intrepidity and profligacy which awed ven those whom they served.

When they were not thus engaged, their chief had usually is own fortress, in which, or in its neighbourhood, they en-

joyed an irksome rest; and though their wants were at one time partly supplied from the property of the inhabitants, the lavish distribution of their plunder at others prevented them from being obnoxious. The neighbouring governments sometimes professed, but seldom endeavoured, to suppress the military communities. The commanders sometimes even relied so far upon this policy of the several powers as to frequent their capitals; and Montoni, having met them in the gaming parties of Venice and Padua, conceived a desire to emulate their characters before his ruined fortunes tempted him to adopt their practices. It was for the arrangement of his present plan of life that the midnight councils were held at his mansion in Venice, and at which Orsino and some other members of the present community then assisted with suggestions which they had since executed with the wreck of their fortunes.

On the return of night, Emily resumed her station at the casement. There was now a moon; and as it rose over the tufted woods, its yellow light served to show the lonely terrace and the surrounding objects more distinctly than the twilight of the stars had done, and promised Emily to assist her observations, should the mysterious form return. On this subject she again wavered in conjecture, and hesitated whether to speak to the figure, to which a strong and almost irresistible interest urged her; but terror, at intervals, made her reluctant to do so.

Thus the time passed as she sat at her casement, awed by expectation and by the gloom and stillness of midnight; for she saw obscurely in the moonlight only the mountains and woods, a cluster of towers that formed the west angle of the castle, and the terrace below; and heard no sound except now and then the lonely watchword passed by the sentinels on duty, and afterwards the steps of the men who came to relieve guard, and whom she knew at a distance on the rampart by their pikes that glittered in the moonbeam and then by the few short words in which they hailed their fellows of the night. Emily retired within her chamber while they passed the casement. When she returned to it, all was again quiet. It was now very

te; she was wearied with watching, and began to doubt the ality of what she had seen on the preceding night; but she ill lingered at the window, for her mind was too perturbed admit of sleep. The moon shone with a clear lustre that fforded her a complete view of the terrace; but she saw only solitary sentinel pacing at one end of it; and at length, tired ith expectation, she withdrew to seek rest.

Montoni on the next day took no notice of Emily's appointed sit; but she, more anxious than before to see him, sent Annette inquire at what hour he would admit her. He mentioned even o'clock, and Emily was punctual to the moment; at hich she called up all her fortitude to support the shock of s presence, and the dreadful recollections it enforced. He was ith several of his officers in the cedar room; on observing hom she paused; and her agitation increased while he con- nued to converse with them, apparently not observing her, ll some of his officers turning round saw Emily, and uttered n exclamation. She was hastily retiring when Montoni's voice rrested her, and in a faltering accent she said, "I would speak ith you, Signor Montoni, if you are at leisure."

"These are my friends," he replied; "whatever you would y they may hear."

Emily, without replying, turned from the rude gaze of the nevaliers; and Montoni then followed her to the hall, whence e led her to a small room, of which he shut the door with iolence. As she looked on his dark countenance, she again nought she saw the murderer of her aunt; and her mind was convulsed with horror, that she had not power to recall nought enough to explain the purport of her visit; and to ust herself with the mention of Madame Montoni was more an she dared.

Montoni at length impatiently inquired what she had to say. have no time for trifling," he added, "my moments are nportant."

Emily then told him that she wished to return to France, nd came to beg that he could permit her to do so. But when e looked surprised, and inquired for the motive of the request,

she hesitated, became paler than before, trembled, and had nearly sunk at his feet. He observed her emotion with apparent indifference, and interrupted the silence by telling her he must be gone. Emily, however, recalled her spirits sufficiently to enable her to repeat her request. And when Montoni absolutely refused it, her slumbering mind was roused.

"I can no longer remain here with propriety, sir," said she, "and I may be allowed to ask by what right you detain me?"

"It is my will that you remain here," said Montoni, laying his hand on the door to go; "let that suffice you."

Emily, considering that she had no appeal from this will, forbore to dispute his right, and made a feeble effort to persuade him to be just. "While my aunt lived, sir," said she in a tremulous voice, "my residence here was not improper: but now that she is no more, I may surely be permitted to depart. My stay cannot benefit you, sir, and will only distress me."

"Who told you that Madame Montoni was dead?" said Montoni with an inquisitive eye. Emily hesitated, for nobody had told her so, and she did not dare to avow to having seen that spectacle in the portal-chamber which had compelled her to the belief.

"Who told you so?" he repeated more sternly.

"Alas! I know it too well," replied Emily: "spare me on this terrible subject."

She sat down on a bench to support herself.

"If you wish to see her," said Montoni, "you may; she lies in the east turret."

He now left the room without awaiting her reply, and returned to the cedar chamber.

Having talked with the subtle Orsino on the plan of an excursion which he meditated for a future day, his friend advised that they should lie in wait for the enemy; which Verezzi impetuously opposed, reproached Orsino with want of spirit, and swore that if Montoni would let him lead on fifty men, he would conquer all that should oppose him.

Emily, meanwhile, stunned by the last words of Montoni, forgot, for the moment, his declaration that she should continue

n the castle while she thought of her unfortunate aunt, who, e had said, was laid in the east turret.

After a long struggle she determined to accept his permission o visit the turret, and to take a last look of her ill-fated aunt: vith this design she returned to her chamber, and, while she vaited for Annette to accompany her, endeavoured to acquire ortitude sufficient to support her through the approaching cene.

Annette came, and Emily mentioned her purpose, and An- iette was with much difficulty prevailed upon to accompany ier to the turret; but no consideration could make her promise o enter the chamber of death.

They now left the corridor, and having reached the foot of he staircase which Emily had formerly ascended, Annette leclared she would go no farther, and Emily proceeded alone. When she saw the track of blood which she had before observed, ier spirits fainted, and being compelled to rest on the stairs, he almost determined to proceed no farther. The pause of a few moments restored her resolution, and she went on.

As she drew near the landing-place upon which the upper hamber opened, she remembered that the door was formerly astened, and apprehended that it might still be so. In this xpectation, however she was mistaken; for the door opened t once into a dusky and silent chamber, round which she earfully looked, and then slowly advanced, when a hollow oice spoke. Emily, who was unable to speak, or to move from he spot, uttered no sound of terror. The voice spoke again; nd then, thinking that it resembled that of Madame Montoni, Emily's spirits were instantly roused; she rushed towards a bed hat stood in a remote part of the room, and drew aside the urtains. Within, appeared a pale and emaciated face. She tarted back, then again advanced, shuddered as she took up he skeleton hand that lay stretched upon the quilt; then let t drop, and then viewed the face with a long, unsettled gaze. t was that of Madame Montoni, though so changed by illness hat the resemblance of what it had been could scarcely be

traced in what it now appeared. She was still alive, raising her heavy eyes, she turned them on her niece.

"Where have you been so long ?" said she in the same hollow tone; "I thought you had forsaken me."

"Do you indeed live," said Emily, at length, "or is this but a terrible apparition ?" She received no answer, and again she snatched up the hand. "This is substance," she exclaimed; "but it is cold—cold as marble !" She let it fall. "Oh, if you really live, speak !" said Emily in a voice of desperation, "that I may not lose my senses—say you know me !"

"I do live," replied Madame Montoni, "but—I feel that I am about to die."

Emily clasped the hand she held, more eagerly, and groaned. They were both silent for some moments. Then Emily endeavoured to soothe her, and inquired what had reduced her to this present deplorable state.

Montoni, when he removed her to the turret under the improbable suspicion of having attempted his life, had ordered the men employed on the occasion to observe a strict secrecy concerning her. To this he was influenced by a double motive. He meant to debar her from the comfort of Emily's visits, and to secure an opportunity of privately dispatching her, should any new circumstances occur to confirm the present suggestions of his suspecting mind. He continued to confine her in the turret, under a strict guard; and, without pity or remorse, had suffered her to lie, forlorn and neglected, under a raging fever, till it had reduced her to the present state.

The track of blood which Emily had seen on the stairs, had flowed from the unbound wound of one of the men employed to carry Madame Montoni, and which he had received in the late affray. At night these men, having contented themselves with securing the door of their prisoner's room, had retired from guard; and then it was that Emily, at the time of her first inquiry, had found the turret so silent and deserted.

When she had attempted to open the door of the chamber, her aunt was sleeping, and this occasioned the silence which had contributed to delude her into a belief that she was no

ore. The spectacle in the portal chamber, which afterwards nfirmed Emily's horrible suspicion, was the corpse of a man ho had fallen in the affray.

Emily, after asking Madame Montoni a thousand questions ncerning herself, left her, and sought Montoni; for the more lemn interest she felt for her aunt, made her now regardless the resentment her remonstrances might draw upon herself, nd of the improbability of his granting what she meant to treat.

"Madame Montoni is now dying, sir," said Emily, as soon she saw him. "Your resentment, surely, will not pursue her the last moment ! Suffer her to be removed from that forrn room to her own apartment, and to have necessary comrts administered."

He turned away, half sullen and half relenting; but finally nsented that his wife should be removed to her own apartent, and that Emily should attend her. Dreading equally at this relief might arrive too late, and that Montoni might tract his concession, Emily scarcely stayed to thank him for ; but, assisted by Annette, she quickly prepared Madame ontoni's bed, and they carried her a cordial that might enable r feeble frame to sustain the fatigue of a removal.

Madame was scarcely arrived in her own apartment, when n order was given by her husband that she should remain the turret; but Emily, thankful that she had made such spatch, hastened to inform him of it, as well as that a second moval would instantly prove fatal; and he suffered his wife continue where she was.

During this day, Emily never left Madame Montoni, except prepare such little nourishing things as she judged necessary sustain her, and which Madame Montoni received with quiet quiescence. Emily meanwhile watched over her with the most nder solicitude, no longer seeing her imperious aunt in the or object before her, but the sister of her late beloved father, a situation that called for all her compassion and kindness. hen night came, she determined to sit up with her aunt; but

this the latter positively forbade, commanding her to retire to rest, and Annette alone to remain in her chamber.

Soon after twelve, having enjoined Annette to be wakeful, and to call her should any change appear for the worse, Emily sorrowfully bade Madame Montoni good-night and withdrew to her chamber.

Occupied by melancholly reflections and by anticipations as sad, she did not retire immediately to rest, but leaned thoughtfully on her open casement.

She continued to weep for some time, lost to everything but to a gentle sense of her misfortunes. When she at length took the handkerchief from her eyes, she perceived, before her, on the terrace below, the figure she had formerly observed, which stood fixed and silent immediately opposite to her casement. On perceiving it, she started back, and terror for some time overcame curiosity; at length she returned to the casement, and still the figure was before it, which she now compelled herself to observe; but was utterly unable to speak, as she had formerly intended. The moon shone with a clear light, and it was perhaps the agitation of her mind that prevented her distinguishing, with any degree of accuracy, the form before her. It was still stationary, and she began to doubt whether it was really animated.

Her scattered thoughts were now so far returned, as to remind her that her light exposed her to dangerous observation, and she was stepping back to remove it, when she perceived the figure move, and then wave what seemed to be its arm, as if to beckon her; and while she gazed, fixed in fear, it repeated the action. She now attempted to speak, but the words died on her lips, and she went from the casement to remove her light; as she was doing which, she heard from without a faint groan. Listening, but not daring to return, she presently heard it repeated.

"Good God! what can this mean?" said she.

Again she listened, but the sound came no more; and after a long interval of silence, she recovered courage enough to go

:he casement, when she again saw the same appearance ! It koned again, and again uttered a low sound.

That groan was surely human !" said she. "I *will* speak.— o is it," cried Emily in a faint voice, "that wanders at this hour ?"

The figure raised its head, but suddenly started away, and led down the terrace. She watched it for a long while passing ftly in the moonlight, but heard no footstep, till a sentinel m the other extremity of the rampart walked slowly along. e man stopped under her window, and, looking up, called by name. She was retiring precipitately; but a second sum- ns inducing her to reply, the soldier then respectfully asked he had seen anything pass. On her answering that she had, he l no more; but walked away down the terrace, Emily lowing him with her eyes, till he was lost in the distance. , as he was on guard, she knew he could not go beyond the npart, and therefore resolved to wait his return.

Soon after, his voice was heard at a distance, calling loudly; l then a voice still more distant answered, and in the next ment the watchword was given, and passed along the ter- e. As the soldiers moved hastily under the casement, she led to inquire what had happened, but they passed without arding her.

Emily's thoughts returning to the figure she had seen, "It not be a person who has designs upon the castle," said she; ch a one would conduct himself very differently. He would venture where sentinels were on watch, nor fix himself posite to a window where he perceived he must be observed: ch less would he beckon, or utter a sound of complaint.

While she mused, two sentinels walked up the rampart in nest conversation, of which she caught a few words, and rned from these that one of their comrades had fallen down seless. Soon after, three other soldiers appeared slowly vancing from the bottom of the terrace, but she heard only ow voice, that came at intervals. As they drew near, she ceived this to be the voice of him who walked in the middle, parently supported by his comrades; and she again called to

them, inquiring what had happened. At the sound of her voice they stopped, and looked up, while she repeated her question and was told that Roberto, their fellow of the watch, had been seized with a fit, and that his cry as he fell had caused a false alarm.

"Is he subject to fits ?" said Emily.

"Yes, signora," replied Roberto; "but if I had not, what I saw was enough to have frightened the Pope himself."

"What was it ?" inquired Emily trembling.

" I cannot tell what it was, lady, or what I saw, or how it vanished," replied the soldier, who seemed to shudder at the recollection.

"Was it the person whom you followed down the rampart that has occasioned you this alarm ?" said Emily, endeavouring to conceal her own.

"Person !" exclaimed the man,—"it was the devil, and this is not the first time I have seen him !"

"Nor will it be the last," observed one of his comrades laughing.

"No, no, I warrant not," said another.

"Well," rejoined Roberto, "you may be as merry now as you please; you was none so jocose the other night, Sebastian when you was on watch with Launcelot."

"Launcelot need not talk of that," replied Sebastian; "let him remember how he stood trembling, and unable to give the *word,* till the man was gone. If the man had not come so silently upon us, I should have seized him, and soon made him tell who he was."

"What man ?" inquired Emily.

"It was no man, lady," said Launcelot, who stood by, "but the Devil himself, as my comrade says. What man, who does not live in the castle, could get within the walls at midnight? Why I might just as well pretend to march to Venice, and go among all the senators when they are counseling; and I warrant I should have more chance of getting out again alive, than any fellow that we should catch within the gates after dark. So I think I have proved plainly enough that this can be nobody

t lives out of the castle; and now I will prove that it can nobody that lives in the castle—for, if he did—why should be afraid to be seen? So after this, I hope nobody will tend to tell me it was anybody. No, I say again, by holy pe! it was the Devil, and Sebastian, there, knows this is not first time we have seen him."

'When did you see the figure then, before?" said Emily, half ling; who, though she thought the conversation somewhat much, felt an interest which would not permit her to clude it.

'About a week ago, lady," said Sebastian, taking up the story.

'And where?"

'On the rampart, lady, higher up."

'Did you pursue it, that it fled?"

'No, signora. Launcelot and I were on watch together, and rything was so still you might have heard a mouse stir, when denly Launcelot says—'Sebastian! do you see nothing?' urned my head a little to the left, as it might be—thus. o,' says I. 'Hush!' said Launcelot,—'look yonder—just by last cannon on the rampart!' I looked, and then thought I see something move; but there being no light but what the rs gave, I could not be certain. We stood quite silent, to tch it, and presently saw: something pass along the castle ll, just opposite to us!"

'Why did you not seize it, then?" cried a soldier, who had rcely spoken till now.

Aye, why did you not seize it?" said Roberto.

'You should have been there to have done that," replied astian: "you would have been bold enough to have taken it the throat, though it had been the Devil himself; we could take such a liberty, perhaps, because we are not so well uainted with him as you are. But, as I was saying, it stole us so quickly, that we had not time to get rid of our surprise ore it was gone. Then, we knew it was in vain to follow. kept constant watch all that night, but we saw it no more. xt morning we told some of our comrades, who were on duty other parts of the ramparts, what we had seen; but they

had seen nothing, and laughed at us, and it was not till to-night that the same figure walked again."

"Where did you lose it, friend?" said Emily to Roberto.

"When I left you, lady," replied the man, "you might see me go down the rampart, but it was not till I reached the east terrace that I saw anything. Then, the moon shining bright, I saw something like a shadow flitting before me, as it were, at some distance. I stopped when I turned the corner of the east tower, where I had seen this figure not a moment before,—but it was gone! As I stood looking through the old arch which leads to the east rampart, and where I am sure it had passed, I heard, all of a sudden, such a sound!—It was not like a groan, or a cry, or a shout, or anything I ever heard in my life. I heard it only once, and that was enough for me; for I know nothing that happened after, till I found my comrades here about me."

"Come," said Sebastian, "let us go to our posts—the moon is setting. Good night, lady!"

"Aye, let us go," rejoined Roberto. "Good night, lady."

"Good night: the Holy Mother guard you!" said Emily, as she closed her casement, and retired to reflect upon the strange circumstance that had just occurred, connecting which with what had happened on former nights, she endeavoured to derive from the whole something more positive than conjecture. But her imagination was inflamed, while her judgment was not enlightened, and the terrors of superstition again pervaded her mind.

CHAPTER XV

In the morning Emily found Madame Montoni nearly in the same condition as on the preceding night; she had slept little, and that little had not refreshed her; she smiled on her niece, and seemed cheered by her presence, but spoke only a few words, and never named Montoni, who, however, soon after entered the room. His wife, when she understood that he was there, appeared much agitated, but was entirely silent, till

nily rose from a chair at the bedside, when she begged in a eble voice that she would not leave her.

The visit of Montoni was not to soothe his wife, whom he ew to be dying, or to console or to ask her forgiveness, but make a last effort to procure that signature which would nsfer her estates in Languedoc, after her death to him rather an to Emily. This was a scene that exhibited on his part his ual inhumanity, and on that of Madame Montoni a persever- spirit contending with a feeble frame; while Emily repeat- ly declared to him her willingness to resign all claim to those ates, rather than that the last hours of her aunt should be sturbed by contention. Montoni, however, did not leave the om till his wife, exhausted by the obstinate dispute, had nted. Afterwards, however, she recovered her speech, and, ing somewhat restored by a cordial, conversed for a con- derable time on the subject of her estates in France with earness and precision. She directed her niece where to find me papers relative to them, which she had hitherto concealed om the search of Montoni, and earnestly charged her never suffer these papers to escape her.

Soon after this conversation Madame Montoni sunk into a ze. Emily never left her for a moment till long after midnight. t her spirits were wakeful and agitated; and finding it im- ssible to sleep, she determined to watch once more for the ysterious appearance that had so much interested and alarmed r.

It was now the second watch of the night; and about the ne when the figure had before appeared, Emily heard the ssing footsteps of the sentinels on the rampart, as they anged guard; and when all was again silent, she took her tion at the casement, leaving her lamp in a remote part of e chamber, that she might escape notice from without. The oon gave a faint and uncertain light, for heavy vapours rrounded it, and often rolling over the disk, left the scene low in total darkness. It was in one of these moments of scurity that she observed a small and lambent flame moving some distance on the terrace. While she gazed, it disappeared.

Emily thought she heard a footstep. The light appeared and disappeared frequently, while, as she watched, it glided under her casements, and at the same instant she was certain that a footstep passed, but the darkness did not permit her to distinguish any object except the flame. It moved away, and then, by a gleam of lightning, she perceived some person on the terrace. All the anxieties of the preceding night returned. This person advanced, and the playing flame alternately appeared and vanished, Emily wished to speak, to end her doubts whether this figure were human or supernatural; but her courage failed as often as she attempted utterance, till the light moved again under the casement, and she faintly demanded who passed.

"A friend," replied a voice.

"What friend?" said Emily, somewhat encouraged; "who are you, and what is that light you carry?"

"I am Anthonio, one of the signor's soldiers," replied the voice.

"And what is that tapering light you bear?" said Emily; "see how it starts upwards,—and now it vanishes!"

"This light, lady," said the soldier, "has appeared to-night as you see it, on the point of my lance, and ever since I have been on watch; but what it means I cannot tell."

"This is very strange," said Emily.

"My fellow-guard," continued the man, "has the same flame on his arms; he says he has sometimes seen it before. I never did; I am but lately come to the castle, for I have not been long a soldier."

"How does your comrade account for it?" said Emily.

"He says it is an omen, lady, and bodes no good."

"And what harm can it bode?" rejoined Emily.

"He knows not so much as that, lady."

Whether Emily was alarmed by this omen, or not, she certainly was relieved from much terror by discovering this man to be only a soldier on duty, and it immediately occurred to her that it might be he who had occasioned so much alarm on the preceding night. There were, however, some circumstances that still required explanation. As far as she could judge by

e faint moonlight that had assisted her observation, the gure she had seen did not resemble this man either in shape size; besides, she was certain it had carried no arms. The ence of its steps, if steps it had, the moaning sounds, too, nich it had uttered, and its strange disappearance, were cir- mstances of mysterious import, that did not apply, with obability, to a soldier engaged in the duty of his guard.

She now inquired of the sentinel, whether he had seen any rson, besides his fellow-watch, walking on the terrace about dnight; and then briefly related what she had herself served.

"I was not on guard that night, lady," replied the man, "but heard of what happened. There are amongst us who believe range things. Strange stories, too, have long been told of this stle, but it is no business of mine to repeat them; and, for y part, I have no reason to complain, our chief does nobly us."

"I commend your prudence," said Emily. "Good-night, and cept this from me," she added, throwing him a small piece of in, and then closing the casement to put an end to the scourse.

When he was gone, she opened it again, listened with a oomy pleasure to the distant thunder that began to murmur nong the mountains, and watched the arrow lightnings which oke over the remoter scene.

Emily remained at her casement, till the vivid lightning, that w every instant revealed the wide horizon and the landscape low, made it no longer safe to do so, and she went to her uch; but, unable to compose her mind to sleep, still listened silent awe to the tremendous sounds that seemed to shake e castle to its foundation.

She had continued thus for a considerable time, when amidst e uproar of the storm she thought she heard a voice; and sing herself to listen, saw the chamber door open, and nette enter with a countenance of wild affright.

"She is dying, ma'amselle; my lady is dying!" said she.

Emily started up, and ran to Madame Montoni's room. But the last struggle was over—she was gone for ever.

Emily interrogated the terrified Annette, and learned that Madame Montoni had fallen into a doze soon after Emily's departure, in which she had continued until a few minutes before her death.

"I wondered, ma'amselle," said Annette, "what was the reason my lady did not seem frightened at the thunder, when I was so terrified; and I went often to the bed to speak to her, but she appeared to be asleep; till presently I heard a strange noise, and, going to her, saw she was dying."

Emily at this recital shed tears. She had no doubt but that the violent change in the air, which the tempest produced, had effected this fatal one on the exhausted frame of Madame Montoni.

When Montoni was informed of the death of his wife, and considered that she had died without giving him the signature so necessary to the accomplishment of his wishes, no sense of decency restrained the expression of his resentment. Emily anxiously avoided his presence, and watched during two days and two nights, with little intermission, by the corpse of her late aunt.

On the evening of the second day, Annette informed her that the interment was to take place that night.

Emily, shuddering with emotions of horror and grief, assisted by Annette, prepared the corpse for interment; and having wrapped it in cerements and covered it with a winding-sheet, they watched beside it till past midnight, when they heard the approaching footsteps of the men who were to lay it in its earthy bed. It was with difficulty that Emily overcame her emotion, when the door of the chamber being thrown open, their gloomy countenances were seen by the glare of the torch they carried, and two of them, without speaking, lifted the body on their shoulders, while the third, preceding them with the light, descended through the castle towards the grave, which was in the lower vault of the chapel within the castle walls.

After the pause of a moment she went on, and, as she entered

e vaults, saw between the arches, at some distance, the men
y down the body near the edge of an open grave, where
ood another of Montoni's men, and a priest whom she did
ot observe till he began the burial service; then lifting her
es from the ground, she saw the venerable figure of the
iar, and heard him in a low voice, equally solemn and
fecting, perform the service for the dead. At the moment in
hich they let down the body into the earth, the scene was such
only the dark pencil of a Domenichino, perhaps, could have
one justice to. The fierce features and wild dress of the
ndottieri bending with their torches over the grave into
hich the corpse was descending, were contrasted by the
enerable figure of the monk wrapt in long black garments,
s cowl thrown back from his pale face, on which the light
eaming strongly showed the lines of affliction softened by
ety.

When the service was over, the friar regarded Emily with
tention and surprise, and looked as if he wished to speak to
er, but was restrained by the presence of the *condottieri.*
hen they reached the court, the monk gave her his blessing,
nd, after a lingering look of pity, turned away to the portal,
hither one of the men carried a torch; while Annette, lighting
nother, preceded Emily to her apartment.

Several days passed with Emily in total seclusion, and in a
ate of mind partaking both of terror for herself and grief
or the departed. She at length determined to make other
forts to persuade Montoni to permit her to return to France.
ut the horror which his presence inspired, made her defer
om day to day the mention of this subject; and at last she
as awakened from her inactivity only by a message from
m, desiring her attendance at a certain hour. Remembering
en, for the first time since her aunt's death, the papers relative
the estates in question, she determined to search for them
soon as her interview with Montoni was over.

With these resolutions she met him at the appointed time,
nd waited to hear his intention before she renewed her request.
ith him were Orsino and another officer, and both were

standing near a table covered with papers, which he appeared to be examining.

"I sent for you, Emily," said Montoni, raising his head, "that you might be a witness in some business which I am transacting with my friend Orsino. All that is required of you will be to sign your name to this paper." He then took one up, hurried unintelligibly over some lines, and, laying it before her on the table offered her a pen. She took it, and was going to write—when the design of Montoni came upon her mind like a flash of lightning; she trembled, let the pen fall, and refused to sign what she had not read. Montoni affected to laugh at her scruples, and, taking up the paper again, pretended to read; but Emily, who still trembled on perceiving her danger, and was astonished that her own credulity had so nearly betrayed her, positively refused to sign any paper whatever. Montoni, for some time, persevered in affecting to ridicule this refusal; but when he perceived by her steady perseverance that she understood his design, he changed his manner, and bade her follow him to another room.

"I, as the husband of the late Signora Montoni," he said, "am the heir of all she possessed; the estates, therefore, which she refused to me in her lifetime, can no longer be withheld, and, for your own sake, I would undeceive you respecting a foolish assertion she once made to you in my hearing—that these estates would be yours, if she died without resigning them to me. She knew at that moment she had no power to withhold them from me after her decease; and I think you have more sense than to provoke my resentment by advancing an unjust claim. I am not in the habit of flattering, and you will therefore receive as sincere the praise I bestow, when I say that you possess an understanding superior to that of your sex; and that you have none of those contemptible foibles that frequently mark the female character—such as avarice and the love of power."

Montoni paused; and Emily remained silent and expecting.

"If you have a just opinion of the subject in question, you shall be allowed a safe conveyance to France, within a short

eriod; but, if you are so unhappy as to be misled by the late ssertion of the signora, you shall remain my prisoner till you e convinced of your error."

Emily calmly said:

"I am not so ignorant, signor, of the laws on this subject, as be misled by the assertion of any person. The law, in the esent instance, gives me the estates in question, and my own and shall never betray my right."

Montoni looked at her with vexation, and seemed con- dering what to say. "I find that you are weak enough," he sumed, "to credit the idle assertion I alluded to! For your wn sake I lament this; as to me, it is of little consequence. our credulity can punish only yourself; and I must pity the eakness of mind which leads you to so much suffering as you e compelling me to prepare for you."

"You may find, perhaps, signor," said Emily with mild ignity, "that the strength of my mind is equal to the justice f my cause; and that I can endure with fortitude, when it is resistance of oppression."

"You speak like a heroine," said Montoni contemptuously; we shall see whether you can suffer like one."

Emily was silent, and he left the room.

Recollecting that it was for Valancourt's sake she had thus sisted, she now smiled complacently upon the threatened fferings, and retired to the spot which her aunt had pointed ut as the repository of the papers relative to the estates, where e found them as described; and, since she knew of no better lace of concealment than this, returned them without examin- g their contents, being fearful of discovery while she should ttempt a perusal.

To her own solitary chamber she once more returned. As e sat musing, a peal of laughter rose from the terrace, and going to the casement, she saw, with inexpressible surprise, ree ladies, dressed in the gala habit of Venice, walking with veral gentlemen below. She gazed in an astonishment that ade her remain at the window, regardless of being observed, ll the group passed under it; and one of the strangers looking

up, she perceived the features of Signora Livona, with whose manners she had been so much charmed the day after her arrival at Venice, and who had been there introduced at the table of Montoni. This discovery occasioned her an emotion of doubtful joy; yet there was something so extraordinary in her being at this castle, circumstanced as it now, and evidently, by the gaiety of her air, with her own consent, that a very painful surmise arose concerning her character.

On Annette's appearance, however, she inquired concerning these strangers; and the former was as eager to tell, as Emily was to learn.

"They are just come, ma'amselle," said Annette, "with two signors from Venice, and I was glad to see such Christian faces once again. But what can they mean by coming here? They must surely be stark mad to come freely to such a place as this! Yet they do come freely, for they seem merry enough, I am sure."

Annette departed on her business.

In the evening, not choosing to venture down to the ramparts, where she would be exposed to the rude gaze of Montoni's associates, she walked for air in the gallery adjoining her chamber; on reaching the farther end of which she heard distant sounds of merriment and laughter. As she listened, she thought she distinguished female voices mingling with the laughter, and this confirmed her worst surmise concerning the character of Signora Livona and her companions. She continued walking in the gallery till evening threw its melancholy twilight through the painted casements, and deepened the gloom of the oak wainscoting around her.

Emily, however, unwilling to return to her more forlorn chamber whither Annette was not yet come, still paced the gallery. As she passed the door of the apartment, where she had once dared to lift the veil which discovered to her a spectacle so horrible, that she had never after remembered it but with emotions of indescribable awe, this remembrance suddenly recurred. It now brought with it reflections more terrible than it had yet done, which the late conduct of Montoni occasioned;

nd hastening to quit the gallery while she had power to do
, she heard a sudden step behind her. It might be that of
nnette; but turning fearfully to look, she saw through the
oom a tall figure following her, and all the horrors of that
namber rushed upon her mind. In the next moment she found
erself clasped in the arms of some person, and heard a deep
oice murmur in her ear.

When she had power to speak, or to distinguish articulated
ounds, she demanded who detained her.

"It is I," replied the voice—"why are you thus alarmed?"

She looked on the face of the person who spoke; but the
eeble light that gleamed through the high casement at the
nd of the gallery, did not permit her to distinguish the
eatures.

"Whoever you are," said Emily in a trembling voice, "for
Heaven's sake let me go!"

"My charming Emily," said the man, "why will you shut
ourself up in this obscure place, when there is so much gaiety
elow? Return with me to the cedar parlour, where you will
e the fairest ornament of the party; you shall not repent the
xchange."

Emily disdained to reply, and still endeavoured to liberate
erself.

"Promise that you will come," he continued, "and I will
elease you immediately; but first give me a reward for so
oing."

"Who are you?" demanded Emily, in a tone of mingled
error and indignation, while she still struggled for liberty—
who are you, that have the cruelty thus to insult me?"

"Why call me cruel?" said the man; "I would remove you
rom this dreary solitude to a merry party below. Do you not
now me?"

Emily now faintly remembered that he was one of the officers
ho were with Montoni when she attended him in the morn-
ng.—

He attempted to kiss her hand; but the strong impulse of
er indignation gave her power to liberate herself, and she fled

towards the chamber. She closed the door before he reached it; having secured which, she sank in a chair, overcome by terror and by the exertion she had made, while she heard his voice and his attempts to open the door, without having the power to raise herself. At length, she perceived him depart, and had remained listening for a considerable time, and was somewhat revived by not hearing any sound, when suddenly she remembered the door of the private staircase, and that he might enter that way, since it was fastened only on the other side. She then employed herself in endeavouring to secure it in the manner she had formerly done. It appeared to her, that Montoni had already commenced his scheme of vengeance, by withdrawing from her his protection, and she repented of the rashness that made her brave the power of such a man. To retain the estates seemed to be now utterly impossible; and to preserve her life, perhaps her honour, she resolved, if she should escape the horrors of this night, to give up all claims to the estates on the morrow, provided Montoni would suffer her to depart from Udolpho.

Having sat in darkness for some hours, during all which time Annette did not appear, she began to have serious apprehensions for her: but, not daring to venture down into the castle, was compelled to remain in uncertainty as to the cause of this unusual absence.

Emily often stole to the staircase-door to listen if any step approached, but still no sound alarmed her: determining, however, to watch during the night, she once more rested on her dark and desolate couch, and bathed the pillow with innocent tears.

While she thus remained, her ear suddenly caught the notes of distant music, to which she listened attentively; and soon perceiving this to be the instrument she had formerly heard at midnight, she rose, and stepped softly to the casement, to which the sounds appeared to come from a lower room.

In a few moments their soft melody was accompanied by a voice so full of pathos, that it evidently sang not of imaginary sorrows. Its sweet and peculiar tones she thought she had

mewhere heard before; yet, if this was not fancy, it was, at ost, a very faint recollection. It stole over her mind, amidst e anguish of her present suffering, like a celestial strain, othing, and reassuring her.

But her emotion can scarcely be imagined, when she heard ng, with the taste and simplicity of true feeling, one of the opular airs of her native province, to which she had so often stened with delight when a child.

Surprise soon yielded to other emotions; a thought darted like ghtning upon her mind, which discovered a train of hopes at revived all her spirits. Yet these hopes were so new, so nexpected, so astonishing, that she did not dare to trust, ough she could not resolve to discourage them. She sat down the casement, breathless, and overcome with the alternate notions of hope and fear: then rose again, leaned from the indow, that she might catch a nearer sound, listened, now oubting and then believing, softly exclaimed the name of alancourt, and then sank again into the chair. Yes, it was ossible that Valancourt was near her, and she recollected cir-umstances that induced her to believe it was his voice she had st heard.

She remained listening at the casement till the air began to eshen, and one high mountain in the east to glimmer with the orning; when, wearied with anxiety, she retired to her couch, here she found it utterly impossible to sleep; for joy, tender-ess, doubt, and apprehension distracted her during the whole ght. Now she rose from the couch, and opened the casement listen; then she would pace the room with impatient eps, and at length return with despondence to her pillow. ever did hours appear to move so heavily as those of this xious night; after which she hoped that Annette might ppear, and conclude her present state of torturing suspense.

CHAPTER XVI

n the morning Emily was relieved from her fears for Annette, ho came at an early hour.

"Here were fine doings in the castle last night, ma'amselle," said she, as soon as she entered the room—"fine doings, indeed! Was you not frightened, ma'amselle, at not seeing me?"

"I was alarmed both on your account and on my own," replied Emily. ""What detained you?"

"Aye, I said so, I told him so; but it would not do. It was not my fault, indeed, ma'amselle, for I could not get out. That rogue Ludovico locked me up again."

"Locked you up!" said Emily, with displeasure. "Why do you permit Ludovico to lock you up?"

"Holy Saints!" exclaimed Annette, "how can I help it! If he will lock the door, ma'amselle, and take away the key, how am I to get out, unless I jump through the window? But you know, I dare say, ma'am, what a hurly-burly the castle was in last night; you must have heard some of the uproar."

"What, were they disputing, then?" said Emily.

"No, ma'amselle, not fighting, but almost as good, for I believe there was not one of the signors sober; and what is more, not one of those fine ladies sober, either. I thought, when I saw them first, that all those fine silks and fine veils—why, ma'amselle, their veils were worked with silver!—and fine trimmings bode no good—I guessed what they were!"

"I have some questions to ask you on another subject," interrupted Emily, quite wearied by this story. "Do you know whether there are any prisoners in the castle, and whether they are confined at this end of the edifice?"

"I was not in the way, ma'amselle," replied Annette, "when the first party came in from the mountains, and the last party is not come back yet."

Emily inquired if she had ever heard the servants talk of prisoners.

"Ah, ma'amselle!" said Annette archly, "now I dare say you are thinking of Monsieur Valancourt, and that he may have come among the armies, which, they say, are come from our country, to fight against this state, and that he has met with some of *our* people, and is taken captive. O Lord! how glad I should be, if it was so!"

Emily could not forbear smiling, and repeated her inquiry, hether she had heard the servants talk of prisoners.

"No, ma'amselle," replied she, "never; and lately they have one nothing but talk of the apparition that has been walking bout of a night on the ramparts, and that frightened the ntinels into fits. It came among them like a flash of fire, ey say, and they all fell down in a row, till they came to emselves again; and then it was gone, and nothing to be en but the old castle walls; so they helped one another up gain as fast as they could. You would not believe, ma'amlle, though I showed you the very cannon where it used to ppear."

Emily turned away to conceal her emotion, and then desired nnette to go and make inquiry concerning the prisoners that ight be in the castle, but conjured her to do it with caution nd on no account to mention her name, or that of Monsieur alancourt.

The late resolution of Emily to resign her estates to Montoni, ow gave way to new considerations; the possibility that alancourt was near her, revived her fortitude, and she deterined to brave the threatened vengeance, at least, till she ould be assured whether he was really in the castle. She was this temper of mind, when she received a message from Iontoni, requiring her attendance in the cedar parlour, which e obeyed with trembling.

Montoni was alone. "I sent for you," said he, "to give you nother opportunity of retracting your late mistaken assertions oncerning the Languedoc estates. I will condescend to advise here I may command. If you are really deluded by an opinion at you have any right to these estates, at least do not persist the error—an error which you may perceive, too late, has een fatal to you. Dare my resentment no further, but sign e papers."

"Never, sir," replied Emily; "that request would have proved me the injustice of your claim, had I even been ignorant of y right."

Montoni turned pale with anger, while his quivering lip and

lurking eye made her almost repent the boldness of her speech.

"Then all my vengeance falls upon you," he exclaimed with a horrible oath. "And think not it shall be delayed. Neither the estates in Languedoc nor Gascony shall be yours; you have dared to question my right—now dare to question my power, I have a punishment which you think not of: it is terrible! This night—this very night——"

"This night!" repeated another voice.

Montoni paused, and turned half round; but, seeming to recollect himself, he proceeded in a lower tone.

"You have lately seen one terrible example of obstinacy and folly; yet this, it appears, has not been sufficient to deter you—I could tell you of others—I could make you tremble at the bare recital."

He was interrupted by a groan, which seemed to rise from underneath the chamber they were in; and, as he threw a glance round it, impatience and rage flashed from his eyes, yet something like a shade of fear passed over his countenance. Emily sat down in a chair near the door, for the various emotions she had suffered now almost overcame her.

Another groan filled the pause which Montoni made.

"Leave the room instantly!" said he, seeming not to notice this strange occurrence. Without power to implore his pity, she rose to go, but found that she could not support herself; awe and terror overcame her, and she sank again into the chair.

"Quit my presence!" cried Montoni. "This affectation of fear ill becomes the heroine who has just dared to brave my indignation."

"Did you hear nothing, signor?" said Emily trembling, and still unable to leave the room.

"I heard my own voice," rejoined Montoni sternly.

"And nothing else?" said Emily, speaking with difficulty. "There again! Do you hear nothing now?"

"Obey my order," repeated Montoni. "And for these fool's tricks—I will soon discover by whom they are practised."

Emily again rose, and exerted herself to the utmost to leave the room, while Montoni followed her; but instead of calling

oud to his servants to search the chamber, as he had formerly
ne on a similar occurrence, passed to the ramparts.

As in her way to the corridor she rested for a moment at
open casement, Emily saw a party of Montoni's troops
nding down a distant mountain, whom she noticed no further
an as they brought to her mind the wretched prisoners they
ere perhaps bringing to the castle. At length having reached
r apartment, she threw herself upon the couch, overcome with
e new horrors of her situation.

She was at length roused from the reverie which engaged
r, by a confusion of distant voices, and a clattering of hoofs,
at seemed to come on the wind, from the courts. A sudden
pe that some good was approaching seized her mind.
Soon after, she heard voices faintly from the halls, and the
ise of horses' feet sank away in the wind, silence ensued.
nily listened anxiously for Annette's step in the corridor;
t a pause of total stillness continued, till again the castle
emed to be all tumult and confusion. She heard the echoes
many footsteps passing to and fro in the halls and avenues
low, and then busy tongues were loud on the rampart.
aving hurried to her casement, she perceived Montoni with
me of his officers leaning on the walls, and pointing from
em; while several soldiers were employed at the farther end
the rampart about some cannon; and she continued to observe
em, careless of the passing time.

Annette at length appeared, but brought no intelligence of
alancourt; "For, ma'amselle," said she, "all the people pretend
know nothing about any prisoners. But here is a fine piece
business! The rest of the party are just arrived, ma'am;
ey came scampering in, as if they would have broken their
cks; one scarcely knew whether the man or his horse would
t within the gates first. And they have brought word—and
ch news! they have brought word that a party of the enemy,
they call them, are coming towards the castle; so we shall
ve all the officers of justice, I suppose, besieging it! all
ose terrible-looking fellows one used to see at Venice."

"Thank God!" exclaimed Emily, fervently; "there is yet a hope left for me, then!"

"Well, ma'amselle, all the castle is in such a hurly-burly: some of the men are loading the cannon, and some are examining the great gates, and the walls all round, and are hammering and patching up, just as if those repairs had never been made, that were so long about. But what is to become of me and you, ma'amselle, and Ludovico? Oh! when I hear the sound of the cannon I shall die with fright: if I could but catch the great gate open for one minute, I would be even with it for shutting me within these walls so long!—it should never see me again."

Emily caught the latter words of Annette. "Oh! if you could find it open, but for one moment!" she exclaimed, "my peace might yet be saved!" The heavy groan she uttered, and the wildness of her look, terrified Annette still more than her words; who entreated Emily to explain the meaning of them, to whom it suddenly occurred that Ludovico might be of some service, if there should be a possibility of escape, and who repeated the substance of what had passed between Montoni and herself, but conjured her to mention this to no person except to Ludovico. "It may perhaps be in his power," she added, "to effect our escape. If he is willing to undertake this, he shall be amply rewarded. I cannot speak with him myself, for we might be observed, and then effectual care would be taken to prevent our flight. But be quick, Annette, and, above all, be discreet—I will await your return in this apartment."

The girl, whose honest heart had been much affected by the recital, was now as eager to obey as Emily was to employ her, and she immediately quitted the room.

Montoni, though not precisely what Emily apprehended him to be—a captain of banditti—had employed his troops in enterprises not less daring, or less atrocious, than such a character would have undertaken. They had not only pillaged, whenever opportunity offered, the helpless traveller, but had attacked and plundered the villas of several persons, which, being situated among the solitary recesses of the mountains,

ere totally unprepared for resistance. But though they had eady pillaged several mansions, and brought home con- lerable treasures, they had ventured to approach only one stle, in the attack of which they were assisted by other troops their own order; from this, however, they were vigorously pulsed, and pursued by some of the foreign enemy, who were league with the besieged. Montoni's troops fled precipitately wards Udolpho, but were so closely tracked over the moun- ins, that when they reached one of the heights in the neigh- urhood of the castle, and looked back upon the road, they rceived the enemy winding, among the cliffs below, and not ore than a league distant.

As Emily awaited anxiously some information from below, e now saw from her casements a body of troops pour over e neighbouring heights.

At length she heard a footstep approach her chamber; and ening the door, saw not Annette, but old Carlo ! New fears shed upon her mind. He said he came from the signor, who d ordered him to inform her that she must be ready to depart om Udolpho immediately, for that the castle was about to besieged; and that mules were preparing to convey her, with r guides, to a place of safety.

Emily entreated him to inform her whither she was to go; d after some hesitation, he said he had received no orders to l; but on her repeating the question, replied that he believed e was to be carried into Tuscany.

"To Tuscany !" exclaimed Emily, "and why thither ?"

Carlo answered that he knew nothing further than that she as to be lodged in a cottage on the borders of Tuscany, at e feet of the Apennines—"not a day's journey distant," id he.

Emily now dismissed him, and with trembling hands pre- red the small package that she meant to take with her; while e was employed about which, Annette returned.

"Oh, ma'amselle," said she, "nothing can be done !"

She now began to weep, but revived upon hearing of what d just occurred, and entreated Emily to take her with her.

"That I will do most willingly," replied Emily, "if Signor Montoni permits it:" to which Annette made no reply, but ran out of the room, and immediately sought Montoni, who was on the terrace surrounded by his officers, where she began her petition. He sharply bade her go into the castle, and absolutely refused her request.

In an agony of disappointment she returned to Emily, who foreboded little good towards herself from this refusal to Annette, and who, soon after, received a summons to repair to the great court, where the mules with their guides were in waiting. Annette, followed to the courts, which were now thronged with people busy in preparation for the enemy; and having seen her mount her mule, and depart with her attendants through the portal, turned into the castle and wept again.

Emily, meanwhile, as she looked back upon the gloomy courts of the castle, no longer silent as when she had first entered them, but resounding with the noise of preparation for their defence, as well as crowded with soldiers and workmen hurrying to and fro; and when she passed once more under the huge portcullis which had formerly struck her with terror and dismay, felt the joy of a prisoner who suddenly finds himself at liberty.

As Emily gazed, with these emotions, upon the turrets of the castle rising high over the woods among which she wound, the stranger, whom she believed to be confined there, returned to her remembrance; and anxiety and apprehension, lest he should be Valancourt, again passed like a cloud upon her joy.

Soon after, a trumpet echoed faintly from a distance; the guides stopped, and looked towards the quarter whence it came: but the thick woods which surrounded them excluding all view of the country beyond, one of the men rode on to the point of an eminence that afforded a more extensive prospect, to observe how near the enemy, whose trumpet he guessed this to be, were advanced; the other, meanwhile, remained with Emily, and to him she put some questions concerning the stranger at Udolpho. Ugo, for this was his name, said that there were several prisoners in the castle; but he neither recollected their

rsons, nor the precise time of their arrival, and could there-
re give her no information.

Bertrand, the other man, being now returned, Emily inquired
further; and when he had related to his companion what he
d seen, they travelled on in deep silence; while Emily often
ught between the opening woods partial glimpses of the
stle above—the west towers, whose battlements were now
owded with archers, and the ramparts below, where soldiers
ere seen hurrying along, or busy upon the walls, preparing
e cannon.

Having emerged from the woods, they wound along the
lley in an opposite direction to that from whence the enemy
ere approaching. Emily had now a full view of Udolpho,
ith its grey walls, towers and terraces, high overtopping the
ecipices and the dark woods, and glittering partially with
e arms of the *condottieri*, as the sun's rays, streaming through
autumnal cloud, glanced upon a part of the edifice, whose
maining features stood in darkened majesty. She continued
gaze through her tears, upon walls that perhaps confined
alancourt, and which now, as the cloud floated away, were
ghted up with sudden splendour, and then, as suddenly, were
rouded in gloom; while the passing gleam fell on the wood-
ps below, and heightened the first tints of autumn that
d begun to steal upon the foliage. The winding mountains
length shut Udolpho from her view, and she turned with
ournful reluctance to other objects. The melancholy sighing
the wind among the pines that waved high over the steeps,
d the distant thunder of a torrent, assisted her musings, and
nspired with the wild scenery around to diffuse over her
ind emotions solemn, yet not unpleasing, but which were
on interrupted by the distant roar of cannon echoing among
e mountains. The sounds rolled along the wind, and were
peated in faint and fainter reverberation, till they sank in
llen murmurs. This was a signal that the enemy had reached
e castle, and fear for Valancourt again tormented Emily.
e turned her anxious eye towards that part of the country
here the edifice stood, but the intervening heights concealed

it from her view; still, however, she saw the tall head of a mountain which immediately fronted her late chamber, and on this she fixed her gaze, as if it could have told her of all that was passing in the scene it overlooked. The guides twice reminded her that she was losing time, and that they had far to go, before she could turn from this interesting object; and even she again moved onward, she often sent a look back, till only its blue point, brightening in a gleam of sunshine, appeared peeping over other mountains.

The sound of the cannon affected Ugo as the blast of the trumpet does the war-horse; it called forth all the fire of his nature; he was impatient to be in the midst of the fight, and uttered frequent execrations against Montoni for having sent him to a distance. The feelings of his comrade seemed to be very opposite, and adapted rather to the cruelties than to the danger of war.

Emily asked frequent questions concerning the place of her destination, but could only learn that she was going to a cottage in Tuscany; and whenever she mentioned the subject, she fancied she perceived, in the countenances of these men, an expression of malice and cunning that alarmed her.

It was afternoon when they had left the castle. Towards evening, they wound down precipices black with forests of cypress, pine, and cedar, into a glen so savage and secluded that, if Solitude ever had local habitation, this might have been "her place of dearest residence."

It was in this glen that they proposed to alight, "For," said Ugo, "night will come on presently, and when the wolves will make it dangerous to stop."

His comrade assented, and turning the mules out of the road, they advanced towards a cliff overhung with cedars, Emily following in trembling silence. They lifted her from her mule, and having seated themselves on the grass at the foot of the rocks, drew some homely fare from a wallet, of which Emily tried to eat a little, the better to disguise her apprehensions.

The sun was now sunk behind the high mountains in the

st, upon which a purple haze began to spread, and the gloom twilight to draw over the surrounding objects. To the low d sullen murmur of the breeze passing among the woods, e no longer listened with any degree of pleasure, for it con- ired with the wildness of the scene and the evening hour to press her spirits.

Suspense had so much increased her anxiety as to the prisoner Udolpho, that finding it impracticable to speak alone with ertrand on that subject, she renewed her questions in the esence of Ugo; but he either was, or pretended to be, entirely norant concerning the stranger. When he had dismissed the uestion, he talked with Ugo on some subject which led to the ention of Signor Orsino, and of the affair that had banished m from Venice; respecting which Emily had ventured to ask few questions.

"But I was speaking of Signor Orsino," resumed Bertrand; e is one of those who love to do justice at once. I remember, out ten years ago, the signor had a quarrel with a cavaliero Milan. The story was told me then, and it is still fresh in y head. They quarrelled about a lady that the signor liked, d she was perverse enough to prefer the gentleman of Milan, d even carried her whim so far as to marry him. This ovoked the signor, as well it might, for he had tried to talk ason to her a long while, and used to send people to serenade r under her windows of a night; and used to make verses out her, and would swear she was the handsomest lady in ilan. But all would not do—nothing would bring her to ason; and, as I said, she went so far as to marry this other valiero. This made the signor wroth, with a vengeance: he solved to be even with her though; and he watched his opor- nity, and did not wait long, for soon after the marriage they t out for Padua, nothing doubting, I warrant, of what was eparing for them. The cavaliero thought, to be sure, he was be called to no account, but was to go off triumphant; ut he was soon made to know another sort of story."

"What, then the lady had promised to have Signor Orsino?" id Ugo.

"Promised ! No," replied Bertrand, "she had not wit enough even to tell him she liked him, as I heard, but the contrary, for she used to say, from the first, she never meant to have him. And this was what provoked the signor so; and with good reason, for who likes to be told that he is disagreeable ? and this was saying as good. It was enough to tell him this; she need not have gone and married another."

"What, she married, then, on purpose to plague the signor ?" said Ugo.

"I don't know as for that," replied Bertrand: "they said, indeed, that she had had a regard for the other gentleman a great while; but that is nothing to the purpose, she should not have married him, and then the signor would not have been so much provoked. She might have expected what was to follow: it was not to be supposed he would bear her ill usage tamely, and she might thank herself for what happened. But, as I said, they set out for Padua, she and her husband, and the road lay over some barren mountains like these. This suited the signor's purpose well. He watched the time of their departure, and sent his men after them, with directions what to do. They kept their distance till they saw their opportunity, and this did not happen till the second day's journey, when, the gentleman having sent his servants forward to the next town, maybe to have horses in readiness, the signor's men quickened their pace, and overtook the carriage in a hollow between two mountains, where the woods prevented the servants from seeing what passed, though they were then not far off. When we came up, we fired our tromboni, but missed."

Emily turned pale at these words.

"The gentleman fired again; but he was soon made to alight: and it was as he turned to call his people that he was struck. It was the most dexterous feat you ever saw—he was struck in the back with three stilettos at once. He fell, and was dispatched in a minute; but the lady escaped; for the servants had heard the firing, and came up before she could be taken care of. 'Bertrand,' said the signor, when his men returned——"

'Bertrand !" exclaimed Emily, pale with horror, on whom
t a syllable of this narrative had been lost.
Bertrand swore. "What signifies it," he proceeded, "what
e man was called—Bertrand or Giovanni—or Roberto ? it's
one for that.—'Bertrand,' said the signor, 'if your comrades
d done their duty as well as you, I should not have lost
e lady. Go, my honest fellow, and be happy with this." He
ve him a purse of gold—and little enough too, considering
e service he had done him."
Reflecting on the character and the menaces of Montoni, it
peared not improbable that he had delivered her to them,
the purpose of having her murdered, and of thus securing
himself, without further opposition or delay, the estates
which he had so long and so desperately contended.
Ugo muttered something which Emily did not understand,
d they proceeded in darkness, while she almost wished that
e enemy might discover them; for from change there was
nething to hope, since she could scarcely imagine any
uation more dreadful than her present one.
As they moved slowly along, her attention was surprised by
thin tapering flame that appeared, by fits, at the point of
e pike which Bertrand carried, resembling what she had
served on the lance of the sentinel the night Madame Mon-
ni died, and which he had said was an omen. The event
mediately following, it appeared to justify the assertion, and
superstitious impression had remained on Emily's mind,
nich the present appearance confirmed. She thought it was
omen of her own fate, and watched it successively vanish
d return, in gloomy silence, which was at length interrupted
Bertrand.
"Let us light the torch," said he, "and get under shelter of
e woods—a storm is coming on—look at my lance."
He held it forth, with the flame tapering at its point.
At length Ugo found a flint, and the torch was lighted. The
en then dismounted, and, having assisted Emily, led the mules
wards the woods that skirted the glen on the left.
She could not approach these woods without experiencing

keener sense of her danger. Their deep silence, except when the wind swept among their branches, and impenetrable gloom shown partially by the sudden flash, and then by the red glare of the torch, which served only to make darkness visible, were circumstances that contributed to renew all her most terrible apprehensions; she thought, too, that at this moment the countenances of her conductors displayed more than their usual fierceness, mingled with a kind of lurking exultation, which they seemed endeavouring to disguise. To her affrighted fancy it occurred that they were leading her into these woods to complete the will of Montoni by her murder.

After travelling through the woods for nearly an hour, during which the elements seemed to have returned to repose, the travellers, gradually ascending from the glen, found themselves upon the open brow of a mountain, with a wide valley extending in misty moonlight at their feet.

"There is the sea yonder," said Bertrand—as if he had known that Emily was examining the twilight view—"yonder in the west, though we cannot see it."

Emily already perceived a change in the climate, from that of the wild and mountainous tract she had left; and as she continued descending, the air became perfumed by the breath of a thousand nameless flowers among the grass, called forth by the late rain. So soothingly beautiful was the scene around her, and so strikingly contrasted to the gloomy grandeur of those to which she had long been confined, and to the manners of the people who moved among them, that she could almost have fancied herself again at La Vallée.

She now ventured again to inquire whether they were near the place of their destination, and was answered by Ugo, that they had not far to go. "Only to the wood of chestnuts in the valley yonder," said he, "there, by the brook that sparkles with the moon; I wish I was once at rest there, with a flask of good wine and a slice of Turscany bacon."

In a short time they reached the entrance of the wood, and perceived between the twinkling leaves a light streaming from a distant cottage window. They proceeded along the edge of

e brook to where the trees, crowding over it, excluded the
oonbeams; but a long time the light from the cottage above
as seen on its dark tremulous surface. Bertrand now stepped
first, and Emily heard him knock, and call loudly at the
or. As she reached it, the small upper casement, where the
ht appeared, was unclosed by a man, who, having inquired
at they wanted, immediately descended, let them into a neat
stic cot, and called up his wife to set refreshments before the
avellers. As this man conversed, rather apart, with Bertrand,
nily anxiously surveyed him. He was a tall but not robust
asant, of sallow complexion, and had a shrewd and cunning
e; his countenance was not of a character to win the ready
nfidence of youth, and there was nothing in his manner that
ght conciliate a stranger.

Ugo called impatiently for supper, and in a tone as if he
ew his authority here to be unquestionable. " I expected
u here an hour ago," said the peasant, "for I have had Signor
ontoni's letter these three hours, and I and my wife had
ven you up, and gone to bed."

The peasant placed before them all that his cottage afforded
ham, wine, figs, and grapes of such size and flavour as Emily
d seldom tasted.

After taking refreshment, she was shown by the peasant's
fe to her little bedchamber, where she asked some questions
ncerning Montoni; to which the woman, whose name was
orina, gave reserved answers, pretending ignorance of his
ccellenza's intention in sending Emily hither, but acknow-
dging that her husband had been apprised of the circum-
ance. Perceiving that she could obtain no intelligence con-
rning her destination, Emily dismissed Dorina, and retired
repose.

When Emily, in the morning, opened her casement, she was
rprised to observe the beauties that surrounded it. The cot-
ge was nearly embowered in the woods, which were chiefly
chestnut intermixed with some cypress, larch, and sycamore.
neath the dark and spreading branches appeared to the
rth and to the east the woody Apennines, rising in majestic

amphitheatre. Vineyards stretched along the feet of the mountains, where the elegant villas of the Tuscan nobility frequently adorned the scene, and overlooked slopes clothed with groves of olive, mulberry, orange, and lemon. The plain to which these declined, was coloured with the riches of cultivation, whose mingled hues were mellowed into harmony by an Italian sun. Vines hung in luxuriant festoons from the branches of standard fig and cherry trees, while pastures of verdure, such as Emily had seldom seen in Italy, enriched the banks of a stream that, after descending from the mountains, wound along the landscape, which it reflected, to a bay of the sea.

The cottage, which was shaded by the woods from the intenser rays of the sun, and was open only to his evening light, was covered entirely with vines, fig-trees, and jessamine whose flowers surpassed in size and fragrance any that Emily had seen.

She was soon summoned to breakfast by the peasant's daughter, a girl of about seventeen, of a pleasant countenance, which, Emily was glad to observe, seemed animated with the pure affections of nature. Maddelina spoke little; but what she said was in a soft voice, and with an air of modesty and complacency that interested Emily, who breakfasted at a separate table with Dorina, while Ugo and Bertrand were taking a repast of Tuscany bacon and wine with their host, near the cottage door; when they had finished which, Ugo, rising hastily, inquired for his mule, and Emily learned that he was to return to Udolpho, while Bertrand remained at the cottage; a circumstance which, though it did not surprise, distressed her.

When Ugo was departed, Emily proposed to walk in the neighbouring woods; but on being told that she must not quit the cottage without having Bertrand for her attendant, she withdrew to her own room.

Preferring the solitude of her room to the company of the person below stairs, Emily dined above, and Maddelina was suffered to attend her, from whose simple conversation she learned that the peasant and his wife were old inhabitants of

is cottage, which had been purchased for them by Montoni reward of some service rendered him many years before by larco, to whom Carlo, the steward at the castle, was nearly lated. "So many years ago, signora," added Maddelina, "that know nothing about it; but my father did the signor a great od, for my mother has often said to him, this cottage was e least he ought to have had."

To the mention of this circumstance Emily listened with a inful interest, since it appeared to give a frightful colour to e character of Marco, whose service, thus rewarded by Mon-ni, she could scarcely doubt had been criminal. "Did you er hear how many years it is," said Emily, who was con-dering of Signora Laurentini's disappearance from Udolpho, ince your father performed the service you spoke of?"

"It was a little before he came to live at the cottage, signora," plied Maddelina, "and that is about eighteen years ago."

This was near the period when Signora Laurentini had been id to disappear; and it occurred to Emily that Marco had sisted in that mysterious affair, and, perhaps, had been nployed in a murder! This horrible suggestion fixed her in ch profound reverie, that Maddelina quitted the room unper-ived by her; and she remained unconscious of all around her r a considerable time.

Here she remained alone till evening, and saw the sun descend e western sky, through all his pomp of light and shadow on the mountains, and gleam upon the distant ocean and the ealing sails, as he sunk amidst the waves. Then, at the musing our of twilight, her softened thoughts returned to Valancourt; e again recollected every circumstance connected with the idnight music, and all that might assist her conjecture con-rning his imprisonment at the castle.

Wearied with weeping, she at length lay down on her attress and sunk to sleep, but was soon awakened by a nocking at her chamber door, and starting up in terror, she eard a voice calling her. The image of Bertrand with a stiletto his hand appeared to her alarmed fancy, and she neither pened the door nor answered, but listened in profound silence,

till, the voice repeating her name in the same low tone, she demanded who called."It is I, signora," replied the voice, which she now distinguished to be Maddelina's, "pray open the door —don't be frightened, it is I."

"And what brings you here so late, Maddelina ?" said Emily, as she let her in.

"Hush ! signora, for Heaven's sake, hush ! if we are overheard I shall never be forgiven. My father and mother and Bertrand are all gone to bed," continued Maddelina, as she gently shut the door and crept forward, "and I have brought you some supper, for you had none, you know, signora, below stairs. Here are some grapes and figs, and half a cup of wine."

Emily, smiling through her tears, told Maddelina that she was a good girl, and then accepted her offering. When she was departing Emily requested that she would come to her room as often as she dared without offending her mother; and Maddelina, after promising that she would do so, stole softly back again to her own chamber.

Thus several days passed, during which Emily remained in her own room, Maddelina attending her only at her repast, whose gentle countenance and manners soothed her more than any circumstance she had known for many months. Of her pleasant embowered chamber she now became fond, and began to experience at it those feelings of security which we naturally attach to home. In this interval also her mind, having been undisturbed by any new circumstance of disgust or alarm, recovered its tone sufficiently to permit her enjoyment of her books.

A beautiful evening, that had succeeded to a sultry day, at length induced Emily to walk, though she knew that Bertrand must attend her, and, with Maddelina for her companion, she left the cottage followed by Bertrand, who allowed her to choose her own way. Emily followed the course of the stream under the shades that overhung its grassy margin. She pursued her way towards the sea, which reflected the warm glow of sunset, while the cliffs that rose over its edge were tinted with the last rays. The valley was terminated on the right by a lofty

montory, whose summit, inpending over the waves, was wned with a ruined tower, now serving for the purpose of eacon, whose shattered battlements, and the extended wings some sea-fowl that circled near it, were still illumined by the ward beams of the sun, though his disk was now sunk eath the horizon.

Having reached this headland, Emily gazed with solemn asure on the cliffs that extended on either hand along the uestered shores. The sea slept in a perfect calm; its waves, ng in murmers on the shores, flowed with the gentlest un- ation.

The melancholy sound of the waves at her feet assisted the derness that occasioned her tears; and this was the only nd that broke upon the hour, till, having followed the ndings of the beach for some time, a chorus of voices passed on the air. She paused a moment, wishing to hear more, fearing to be seen, and for the first time looked back to trand, as her protector, who was following at a short tance in company with some other person. Reassured by this cumstance, she advanced towards the sounds, which seemed arise from behind a high promontory that projected athwart beach. There was now a sudden pause in the music, and n one female voice was heard to sing in a kind of chant. ily quickened her steps, and winding round the rock saw, hin the sweeping bay beyond, which was hung with ods from the borders of the beach to the very summit of cliffs, two groups of peasants, one seated beneath the shades, l the other standing on the edge of the sea, round the girl o was singing, and who held in her hand a chaplet of flowers, ich she seemed about to drop into the waves.

The last words being repeated by the surrounding group, garland of flowers was thrown into the waves, and the rus, sinking gradually into a chant, died away in silence.

"What can this mean, Maddelina ?" said Emily, awakening m the pleasing trance into which the music had lulled her.

is is the eve of a festival, signora," replied Maddelina, "and peasants then amuse themselves with all kinds of sports."

"But they talked of a sea-nymph," said Emily: "how came these good people to think of a sea-nymph ?"

"Oh, signora, rejoined Maddelina, mistaking the reason of Emily's surprise, "nobody *believes* in such things, but our old songs tell of them, and when we are at our sports we sometimes sing to them, and throw garlands into the sea."

Emily had been early taught to venerate Florence as the seat of literature and of the fine arts; but that its taste for classic story should descend to the peasants of the country, occasioned her both surprise and admiration. The Arcadian air of the girls next attracted her attention. Their dress was a very short full petticoat of light green, with a bodice of white silk; the sleeves loose, and tied up at the shoulders with ribbons and bunches of flowers. Their hair, falling in ringlets on their necks, was also ornamented with flowers, and with a small straw hat, which, set rather backward, and on one side of the head, gave an expression of gaiety and smartness to the whole figure. When the song had concluded, several of these girls approached Emily, and, inviting her to sit down among them, offered her, and Maddelina, whom they knew, grapes and figs.

Emily accepted their courtesy, much pleased with the gentleness and grace of their manners, which appeared to be perfectly natural to them; and when Bertrand, soon after, approached and was hastily drawing her away, a peasant, holding up a flask, invited him to drink; a temptation which Bertrand was seldom very valiant in resisting.

"Let the young lady join in the dance, my friend," said the peasant, "while we empty this flask; they are going to begin directly. Strike up ! my lads, strike up your tambourines and merry flutes !"

Meanwhile Bertrand was so well pleased with his first flask that he very willingly commenced the attack on the second, and it was late before Emily, not without some apprehension, returned to the cottage.

After this evening she frequently walked with Maddelina, but was never unattended by Bertrand; and her mind became

degrees as tranquil as the circumstances of her situation uld permit.

CHAPTER XVII

We now return for a moment to Venice, where Count Mora- was suffering under an accumulation of misfortunes. Soon er his arrival in that city he had been arrested by order of senate, and without knowing of what he was suspected, s conveyed to a place of confinement, whither the most enuous inquiries of his friends had been unable to trace him. o the enemy was that had occasioned him this calamity he l not been able to guess, unless, indeed, it was Montoni, whom his suspicions rested, and not only with much ap- ent probability, but with justice.

Montoni, meantime, was beset by dangers of another kind. s castle was besieged by troops who seemed willing to dare rything, and to suffer patiently any hardships in pursuit of tory. The strength of the fortress, however, withstood their ack; and this, with the vigorous defence of the garrison and scarcity of provision on these wild mountains, soon com- led the assailants to raise the siege.

When Udolpho was once more left to the quiet possession of ntoni, he dispatched Ugo into Tuscany for Emily, whom he l sent, from considerations of her personal safety, to a place greater security than a castle which was, at that time, liable be overrun by his enemies. Tranquillity being once more tored to Udolpho, he was impatient to secure her again der his roof, and had commissioned Ugo to assist Bertrand guarding her back to the castle. Thus compelled to return, ily bade the kind Maddelina farewell, with regret. The ress she felt on her return towards the place of her former ferings, was, however, softened by a conjecture that Valan- rt was there; and she found some degree of comfort in the ught of being near him, notwithstanding the consideration t he was probably a prisoner.

t was noon when she had left the cottage, and the evening

was closed long before she came within the neighbourhood of Udolpho. There was a moon, but it shone only at intervals, for the night was cloudy; and lighted by the torch which Ugo carried, the travellers passed silently along. Emily was at length roused from her reverie by the far-off sound of the castle clock, to which she listened not without some degree of awe, as it rolled away on the breeze. Another and another note succeeded, and died in sullen murmur among the mountains:—to her mournful imagination it seemed a knell measuring out some fatal period for her.

They continued to wind along the valley, and soon after she saw again the old walls and moonlit towers rising over the woods; the strong rays enabled her also to perceive the ravages which the siege had made—with the broken walls and shattered battlements; for they were now at the foot of the steep on which Udolpho stood.

Presently the castle clock struck twelve, and then a trumpet sounded, of which Emily inquired the occasion.

"Oh ! they are only changing watch," replied Ugo.—"I do not remember this trumpet," said Emily; "it is a new custom. "It is only an old one revived, lady; we always use it in time of war. We have sounded it, at midnight, ever since the place was besieged."

"Who goes yonder ?" cried a sentinel of the castle. "Speak or it will be the worse for you." Bertrand uttered a shout of joy. "Ha ! my brave comrade, is it you ?" said he, and he blew a shrill whistle, which signal was answered by another from the soldier on watch; and the party then passing forward soon after emerged from the woods upon the broken road that led immediately to the castle gates, and Emily saw with renewed terror the whole of that stupendous structure. "Alas !" said she to herself, " I am going again into my prison !"

Emily presently heard his steps descending the stairs within and then the heavy chain fall, and the bolts undraw of a small postern door, which he opened to admit the party. He held the lamp low, to show the step of the gate, and she found herself once more beneath the gloomy arch, and heard the door

ose that seemed to shut her from the world for ever. In the ext moment she was in the first court of the castle, where she rveyed the spacious and solitary area with a kind of calm espair; while the dead hour of the night, the Gothic gloom of e surrounding buildings, and the hollow and imperfect echoes hich they returned as Ugo and the soldier conversed together, sisted to increase the melancholy forebodings of her heart. assing on to the second court, a distant sound broke feebly the silence, and gradually swelling louder as they advanced, nily distinguished voices of revelry and laughter, but they ere to her far other than sounds of joy.

They had now crossed the second court, and reached the ll door, when the soldier, bidding them good night, hastened ck to his post; and while they waited for admittance, Emily nsidered how she might avoid seeing Montoni, and retire noticed to her former apartment, for she shrunk from the ought of encountering either him or any of his party at this our. The uproar within the castle was now so loud, that, ough Ugo knocked repeatedly at the hall door, he was not ard by any of the servants, a circumstance which increased nily's alarm, while it allowed her time to deliberate on the eans of retiring unobserved; for though she might perhaps ss up the great staircase unseen, it was impossible she could nd the way to her chamber without a light, the difficulty of ocuring which, and the danger of wandering about the castle ithout one, immediately struck her. Bertrand had only a rch, and she knew that the servants never brought a per to the door, for the hall was sufficiently lighted by the rge tripod lamp which hung in the vaulted roof; and while she ould wait till Annette could bring a taper, Montoni or some his companions might discover her.

The door was now opened by Carlo; and Emily, having quested him to send Annette immediately with a light to the eat gallery, where she determined to await her, passed on ith hasty steps towards the staircase; while Bertrand and go, with the torch, followed old Carlo to the servants' hall, patient for supper and the warm blaze of a wood fire. Emily,

lighted only by the feeble rays which the lamp above threw between the arches of this extensive hall, endeavoured to find her way to the staircase, now hid in obscurity; while the shouts of merriment that burst from a remote apartment served, by heightening her terror, to increase her perplexity, and she expected every instant to see the door of that room open, and Montoni and his companions issue forth. Having at length reached the staircase, and found her way to the top, she seated herself on the last stair to await the arrival of Annette; for the profound darkness of the gallery deterred her from proceeding farther; and while she listened for her footstep, she heard only distant sounds of revelry, which rose in sullen echoes from among the arcades below. Once she thought she heard a low sound from the dark gallery behind her; and turning her eyes, fancied she saw something luminous move in it; and since she could not at this moment subdue the weakness that caused her fears, she quitted her seat, and crept softly down a few stairs lower.

Annette not yet appearing, Emily now concluded that she was gone to bed, and that nobody chose to call her up; and the prospect that presented itself, of passing the night in darkness in this place, or in some other equally forlorn (for she knew it would be impracticable to find her way through the intricacies of the galleries to her chamber), drew tears of mingled terror and despondency from her eyes.

While thus she sat, she fancied she heard again an odd sound from the gallery, and she listened, scarcely daring to breath, but the increasing voices below overcame every other sound. Soon after, she heard Montoni and his companions burst into the hall, who spoke as if they were much intoxicated, and seemed to be advancing towards the staircase. She now remembered that they must come this way to their chambers, and, forgetting all the terrors of the gallery, hurried towards it with an intention of secreting herself in some of the passages that opened beyond, and of endeavouring, when the signors were retired, to find her way to her own room, or to that of Annette, which was in a remote part of the castle.

With extended arms she crept along the gallery, still hearing
voices of persons below, who seemed to stop in conversation
the foot of the staircase; and then pausing for a moment to
en, half fearful of going further into the darkness of the
lery, where she still imagined from the noise she had heard,
t some person was lurking—"They are already informed of
arrival," said she, "and Montoni is coming himself to seek
! In the present state of his mind, his purpose must be
perate." Then, recollecting the scene that had passed in the
ridor on the night preceding her departure from the castle,
Valancourt!" said she, "I must then resign you for ever.
brave any longer the injustice of Montoni, would not be
titude, but rashness." Still the voices below did not draw
rer, but they became louder, and she distinguished those of
rezzi and Bertolini above the rest, while the few words she
ght made her listen more anxiously for others. The conver-
ion seemed to concern herself; and having ventured to step
ew paces nearer to the staircase, she discovered that they
re disputing about her, each seeming to claim some former
mise of Montoni, who appeared, at first, inclined to appease
l to persuade them to return to their wine, but afterwards
be weary of the dispute, and saying that he left them to
le it as they could, was returning with the rest of the
ty to the apartment he had just quitted. Verezzi then
pped him. "Where is she, signor?" said he in a voice of
patience: "tell us where she is." "I have already told you
t I do not know," replied Montoni, who seemed to be
newhat overcome with wine; "but she is most probably gone
her apartment." Verezzi and Bertolini now desisted from
ir inquiries, and sprang to the staircase together; while
ily, who during this discourse had trembled so excessively
t she had with difficulty supported herself, seemed inspired
h new strength the moment she heard the sound of their
os, and ran along the gallery, dark as it was, with the
tness of a fawn. But long before she reached its extremity,
light which Verezzi carried flashed upon the walls; both
eared, and, instantly perceiving Emily, pursued her. At this

moment, Bertolini, whose steps though swift were not steady, and whose impatience overcame what little caution he had hitherto used, stumbled, and fell at his length. The lamp fell with him, and was presently expiring on the floor; but Verezzi, regardless of saving it, seized the advantage this accident gave him over his rival, and followed Emily, to whom, however, the light had shown one of the passages that branched from the gallery, and she instantly turned into it. Verezzi could just discern the way she had taken, and this he pursued: but the sound of her steps soon sank in distance; while he, less acquainted with the passage, was obliged to proceed through the dark with caution, lest he should fall down a flight of steps, such as in this extensive old castle frequently terminated an avenue. This passage at length brought Emily to the corridor into which her own chamber opened; and not hearing any footstep, she paused to take breath, and consider what was the safest design to be adopted. She had followed this passage merely because it was the first that appeared, and now that she had reached the end of it was as perplexed as before. Whither to go, or how further to find her way in the dark, she knew not; she was aware only that she must not seek her apartment, for there she would certainly be sought; and her danger increased every instant while she remained near it. Her spirits and her breath, however, were so much exhausted, that she was compelled to rest for a few minutes at the end of a passage, and still she heard no steps approaching. As thus she stood, light glimmered under an opposite door of the gallery, and from its situation, she knew that it was the door of that mysterious chamber where she had made a discovery so shocking that she never remembered it but with the utmost horror. That there should be light in this chamber, and at this hour, excited her strong surprise, and she felt a momentary terror concerning it, which did not permit her to look again, for her spirits were now in such a state of weakness, that she almost expected to see the door slowly open and some horrible object appear at it. Still she listened for a step along the passage, and looked up it, where not a ray of light appearing, she concluded that Verezzi had

ıe back for the lamp; and believing that he would shortly be
re, she again considered which way she should go, or rather
ich way she could find in the dark.
A faint ray still glimmered under the opposite door; but so
at, and perhaps so just, was her horror of that chamber,
ıt she would not again have tempted its secrets, though she
d been certain of obtaining the light so important to her
ety. She was still breathing with difficulty, and resting at
e end of the passage, when she heard a rustling sound, and
en a low voice so very near her that it seemed close to her
; but she had presence of mind to check her emotions, and
remain quite still; in the next moment she perceived it to
the voice of Verezzi, who did not appear to know that she
s there, but to have spoken to himself. "The air is fresher
re," said he: "this should be the corridor." Perhaps he was
e of those heroes whose courage can defy an enemy better
an darkness, and he tried to rally his spirits with the sound
his own voice. However this might be, he turned to the
ht, and proceeded with the same stealing steps towards
nily's apartment, apparently forgetting that in darkness she
uld easily elude his search, even in her chamber; and, like
oxicated person, he followed pertinaciously the one idea
at had possessed his imagination.
The moment she heard his steps steal away, she left her
tion, and moved softly to the other end of the corridor,
termined to trust again to chance, and to quit it by the
st avenue she could find: but before she could effect this,
ht broke upon the walls of the gallery, and looking back,
e saw Verezzi crossing it towards her chamber. She now
ded into a passage that opened on the left, without, as she
ought, being perceived; but in the next instant, another light
mmering at the further end of this passage threw her into
w terror. While she stopped and hesitated which way to go,
e pause allowed her to perceive that it was Annette who
vanced, and she hurried to meet her; but her imprudence
ain alarmed Emily, on perceiving whom she burst into a
eam of joy, and it was some minutes before she could be

prevailed with to be silent, or to release her mistress from the ardent clasp in which she held her. When, at length, Emily made Annette comprehend her danger, they hurried towards Annette's room, which was in a distant part of the castle. "Oh, dear ma'amselle," said she as they passed along, "what a terrified time have I had of it ! Oh ! thought I should have died a hundred times ! I never thought I should live to see you again ! and I never was so glad to see anybody in my whole life, as I am to see you now." "Hark ! cried Emily, "we are pursued; that was the echo of steps !" "No, ma'amselle," said Annette, "it was only the echo of a door shutting ! sound runs along these vaulted passages so, that one is continually deceived by it: if one does but speak or cough, it makes a noise as loud as a cannon." "Then there is the greater neccessity for us to be silent," said Emily: "prithee say no more till we reach your chamber ". Here, at length, they arrived without interruption; and Annette having fastened the door, Emily sat down on her little bed, to recover breath and composure. To her inquiry whether Valancourt was among the prisoners in the castle Annette replied that she had not been able to hear, but that she knew there were several persons confined. She then proceeded, in her tedious way, to give an account of the siege, or rather a detail of her terrors and various sufferings during the attack.

Emily now laid herself down on the mattress, and desired Annette to leave the lamp burning on the hearth; having done which, the latter placed herself beside Emily, who, however was not suffered to sleep, for she again thought she heard a noise from the passage; and Annette was again trying to convince her that it was only the wind, when footsteps were distinctly heard near the door. Annette was now starting from the bed; but Emily prevailed with her to remain there, and listened with her in a state of terrible expectation. The steps still loitered at the door, when presently an attempt was made on the lock, and in the next instant a voice called. "For Heaven's sake, Annette do not answer," said Emily softly, "remain quite still: but I fear we must extinguish the lamp, or its glare will

etray us." "Holy Virgin !" exclaimed Annette, forgetting her
scretion, " I would not be in darkness now for the whole
orld." While she spoke, the voice became louder than before,
nd repeated Annette's name. "Blessed Virgin !" cried she sud-
enly, "it is only Ludovico." She rose to open the door, but
mily prevented her, till they should be more certain that it
as he alone; with whom Annette, at length, talked for some
me, and learned that he was come to inquire after herself.
mily, fearful of being overheard if they conversed any longer
rough the door, consented that it should be opened, and a
oung man appeared, whose open countenance confirmed the
vourable opinion of him which his care of Annette had
ready prompted her to form. She entreated his protection,
ould Verezzi make this requisite; and Ludovico offered to
ass the night in an old chamber adjoining, that opened from
e gallery, and on the first alarm to come to their defence.

Emily was much soothed by this proposal; and Ludovico,
aving lighted his lamp, went to his station, while she once
ore endeavoured to repose on her mattress. But a variety of
terests pressed upon her attention, and prevented sleep. She
ought much on what Annette had told her of the dissolute
anners of Montoni and his associates, and more of his present
nduct towards herself, and of the danger from which she
ad just escaped.

On the next morning Emily had a long conversation with
udovico, in which she heard circumstances concerning the
stle, and received hints of the designs of Montoni that
nsiderably increased her alarm. On expressing her surprise
at Ludovico, who seemed to be so sensible of the evils of his
tuation, should continue in it, he informed her that it was
t his intention to do so, and she then ventured to ask him if
e would assist her to escape from the castle. Ludovico assured
r of his readiness to attempt this, but strongly represented
e difficulties of the enterprise, and the certain destruction
hich must ensue should Montoni overtake them before they
ad passed the mountains; he, however, promised to be watchful

of every circumstance that might contribute to the success of the attempt, and to think upon some plan of departure.

Emily now confided to him the name of Valancourt, and begged he would inquire for such a person among the prisoners in the castle. Montoni, who was now recovered from the intoxication of the preceding night, sent for her, and she immediately obeyed the summons. He was alone. "I find," said he, "that you were not in your chamber last night; where were you?" Emily related to him some circumstances of her alarm, and entreated his protection from a repetition of them. "You know the terms of my protection," said he: "if you really value this, you will secure it." His open declaration, that he would only conditionnally protect her while she remained a prisoner in the castle, showed Emily the necessity of an immediate compliance with his terms; but she first demanded whether he would permit her immediately to depart, if she gave up her claim to the contested estates. In a very solemn manner he then assured her that he would; and immediately laid before her a paper, which was to transfer the right of those estates to himself.

After hearing from Montoni a recapitulation of the conditions of her compliance, and a remonstrance that his time was valuable, she put her hand to the paper; when she had done which, she fell back in her chair, but soon recovered, and desired that he would give orders for her departure, and that he would allow Annette to accompany her. Montoni smiled. "It was necessary to deceive you," said he—"there was no other way of making you act reasonably: you shall go, but it must not be at present. I must first secure these estates by possession; when that is done, you may return to France if you will."

Emily left the room, and moved slowly into the hall, where the fear of meeting Verezzi or Bertolini made her quicken her steps, though she could scarcely support herself; and soon after she reached once more her own apartment. Having looked fearfully round her to examine if any person was there, and having searched every part of it, she fastened the door, and sat down by one of the casements.

Thus passed the melancholy day, as she had before passed
ny in the same chamber. When night drew on, she would
ve withdrawn herself to Annette's bed, had not a particular
erest inclined her to remain in this chamber, in spite of her
rs: for when the castle should be still, and the customary
ur arrived, she determined to watch for the music she had
rmerly heard.

The night was stormy; the battlements of the castle appeared
rock in the wind, and at intervals long groans seemed to pass
the air, such as those which often deceive the melancholy
nd in tempests and amidst scenes of desolation. Emily heard,
formerly, the sentinels pass along the terrace to their posts,
d looking out from her casement, observed that the watch
as doubled; a precaution which appeared necessary enough,
hen she threw her eyes on the walls, and saw their shattered
ndition. The well-known sounds of the soldiers' march, and
their distant voices, which passed her in the wind, and were
st again, recalled to her memory the melancholy sensation she
d suffered when she formerly heard the same sounds, and
casioned almost involuntary comparisons between her present
d her late situation. But this was no subject for congra-
lation, and she wisely checked the course of her thoughts,
hile, as the hour was not yet come in which she had been
customed to hear the music, she closed the casement, and
deavoured to await it in patience. The door of the staircase
e tried to secure, as usual, with some of the furniture of the
om; but this expedient her fears now represented to her to be
ry inadequate to the power and perseverance of Verezzi;
d she often looked at a large and heavy chest that stood
the chamber, with wishes that she and Annette had strength
move it. While she blamed the long stay of this girl, who
as still with Ludovico and some other of the servants, she
mmed her wood fire, to make the room appear less desolate,
d sat down beside it with a book, which her eyes perused,
hile her thoughts wandered to Valancourt and her own mis-
rtunes. As she sat thus, she thought, in a pause of the wind,
e distinguished music, and went to the casement to listen,

but the loud swell of the gust overcame every other sound. When the wind sank again, she heard distinctly, in the deep pause that succeeded, the sweet strings of a lute; but again the rising tempest bore away the notes, and again was succeeded by a solemn pause. Emily, trembling with hope and fear, opened her casement to listen, and to try whether her own voice could be heard by the musician; for to endure any longer this state of torturing suspense concerning Valancourt, seemed to be utterly impossible. There was a kind of breathless stillness in the chambers that permitted her to distinguish from below the tender notes of the very lute she had formerly heard, and with it a plaintive voice, made sweeter by the low rustling sound that now began to creep along the wood-tops till it was lost in the rising wind. Their tall heads then began to wave, while, through a forest of pine on the left, the wind, groaning heavily, rolled onward over the woods below, bending them almost to their roots; and as the long-resounding gale swept away, other woods, on the right, seemed to answer the "loud lament"; then others, farther still, softened it into a murmur that died into silence. Emily listened with mingled awe and expectation, hope and fear; and again the melting sweetness of the lute was heard, and the same solemn-breathing voice. Convinced that these came from an apartment underneath, she leaned far out of her window, that she might discover whether any light was there; but the casements below, as well as those above, were sunk so deep in the thick walls of the castle, that she could not see them, or even the faint ray that probably glimmered through their bars. She then ventured to call; but the wind bore her voice to the other end of the terrace, and then the music was heard as before, in the pause of the gust. Suddenly, she thought she heard a noise in her chamber, and she drew herself within the casement; but in a moment after, distinguishing Annette's voice at the door, she concluded it was her she had heard before, and she let her in. "Move softly, Annette, to the casement," said she, "and listen with me; the music is returned." They were silent, till, the measure changing, Annette exclaimed, "Holy Virgin; I know that song well; it is a French song, one

f the favourite songs of my dear country." "Oh! it is a Frenchman that sings," said Annette: "it must be M. Valancourt." "Hark, Annette, do not speak so loud," said Emily, we may be overheard." "What! by the chevalier?" said Annette. "No," replied Emily mournfully, "but by somebody who may report us to the signor. What reason have you to think it is M. Valancourt who sings? But hark! now the voice swells louder! Do you recollect those tones? I fear to trust my own judgment." "I never happened to hear the chevalier sing, mademoiselle," replied Annette, who, as Emily was disappointed to perceive, had no stronger reason for concluding this to be Valancourt, than that the musician must be a Frenchman. Soon after, she distinguished her own name, which was repeated so distinctly that Annette heard it also. She trembled, sank into a chair by the window, and Annette called aloud, "M. Valancourt! M. Valancourt!" while Emily endeavoured to check her; but she repeated the call more loudly than before and the lute and the voice suddenly stopped. Emily listened for some time in a state of intolerable suspense; but no answer being returned, "It does not signify, mademoiselle," said Annette; "it is the chevalier, and I will speak to him." "No, Annette," said Emily; "I think I will speak myself; if it is he, he will know my voice, and speak again." "Who is it," said she, "that sings at this late hour?"

A long silence ensued; and having repeated the question, she perceived some faint accents mingling in the blast that swept by; but the sounds were so distant, and passed so suddenly, that she could scarcely hear them, much less distinguish the words they uttered, or recognize the voice. After another pause, Emily called again; and again they heard a voice, but as faintly as before; and they perceived that there were other circumstances, besides the strength and direction of the wind, to contend with; for the great depth at which the casements were fixed in the castle walls, contributed still more than the distance to prevent articulate sounds from being understood, though general ones were easily heard. Emily, however, ventured to believe, from the circumstance of her voice alone

having been answered, that the stranger was Valancourt, as well as that he knew her; and she gave herself up to speechless joy.

Emily, attended by Annette, continued at the casement for some time, but all remained still; they heard neither lute nor voice again. Annette meanwhile, as impatient as her mistress, went as often to the casement to listen, and returned almost as much disappointed. She at length mentioned Signor Verezzi, and her fear lest he should enter the chamber by the staircase door.

Emily had forgotten till this moment that such a person existed as Verezzi, and all the danger that had appeared to threaten her; but the mention of his name renewed her alarm, and she remembered the old chest that she had wished to place against the door, which she now, with Annette, attempted to move, but it was so heavy that they could not lift it from the floor. "What is in this great old chest, mademoiselle," said Annette, "that makes it so weighty?" Emily having replied that she found it in the chamber when she first came to the castle, and had never examined it—"Then I will, mademoiselle," said Annette, and she tried to lift the lid; but this was held by a lock, for which she had no key, and which, indeed, appeared from its peculiar construction to open with a spring. The morning now glimmered through the casements, and the wind had sunk into a calm. Emily looked out upon the dusky woods. Having inhaled for a while the pure spirit of the air; and having listened, once more, for a note of music, she now closed the casement and retired to rest.

Several of her succeeding days passed in suspense, for Ludovico could only learn from the soldiers that there was a prisoner in the apartment described to him by Emily, and that he was a Frenchman, whom they had taken in one of the skirmishes with a party of his countrymen.

On the fourth day Ludovico informed her that he had hopes of being admitted to the presence of the prisoner; it being the turn of a soldier with whom he had been for some time familiar, to attend him on the following night. He was not deceived in

s hope; for, under pretence of carrying in a pitcher of water, entered the prison, though his prudence having prevented m from telling the sentinel the real motive of his visit, he as obliged to make his conference with the prisoner a very ort one.

Emily awaited the result in her own apartment, Ludovico ving promised to accompany Annette to the corridor in e evening; where, after several hours impatiently counted, arrived. Emily having then uttered the name of Valan-urt, would articulate no more, but hesitated in trembling pectation. "The chevalier would not entrust me with his me, signora," replied Ludovico; "but when I just mentioned urs, he seemed overwhelmed with joy, though he was not much surprised as I expected."

"Does he then remember me?" she exclaimed.

"Oh! it is M. Valancourt," said Annette, and looked patiently at Ludovico, who understood her look, and replied Emily: "Yes, lady, the chevalier does indeed remember you, d I am sure has a very great regard for you, and I made bold say you had for him. He then inquired how you came to ow he was in the castle, and whether you ordered me to eak to him. The first question I could not answer, but the cond I did; and then he went off into his ecstasies again. was afraid his joy would have betrayed him to the sentinel the door."

"Did he send me no message?" said Emily. " Oh yes, signora, d something besides," replied Ludovico, who searched his ckets. "Surely I have not lost it!" added he. "The chevalier id he would have written, madame, if he had had the pen d ink, and was going to have sent a very long message, when e sentinel entered the room, but not before he had given me is." Ludovico then drew forth a miniature from his bosom, hich Emily received with a trembling hand, and perceived be a portrait of herself—the very picture which her mother d lost so strangely in the fishing-house at La Vallée.

Tears of mingled joy and tenderness flowed to her eyes, while udovico proceeded: " 'Tell your lady,' said the chevalier

as he gave me the picture, 'that this has been my companion and only solace in all my misfortunes. Tell her——' Just then, signora, the sentinel came in, and the chevalier said no more: but he had before asked me to contrive an interview for him with you; and when I told him how little hope I had of prevailing with the guard to assist me, he said that was not perhaps of so much consequence as I imagined, and bade me contrive to bring back your answer, and he would inform me of more than he chose to do then. So this, I think, lady, is the whole of what passed."

"How, Ludovico, shall I reward you for your zeal?" said Emily: "but indeed I do not now possess the means. When can you see the chevalier again?" "That is uncertain, signora," replied he: "it depends upon who stands guard next; there are not more than one or two among them, from whom I would dare to ask admittance to the prison-chamber."

Having then wished her good night, Ludovico descended the staircase, and Emily retired to rest but not to sleep, for joy now rendered her as wakeful as she had ever been from grief.

A week elapsed before Ludovico again visited the prison. In this interval he communicated to Emily terrific reports of what was passing in the castle; of riots, quarrels, and of carousals more alarming than either; while, from some circumstances which he mentioned, she not only doubted whether Montoni meant ever to release her, but greatly feared that he had designs concerning her—such as she had formerly dreaded. Her name was frequently mentioned in the conversations which Bertolini and Verezzi held together, and at those times they were frequently in contention. Montoni had lost large sums to Verezzi, so that there was a dreadful possibility of his designing her to be a substitute for the debt.

At length, he informed her that he had again visited the chevalier, who had directed him to confide in the guard of the prison, from whom he had already received some instances of kindness, and who had promised to permit his going into the castle for half an hour on the ensuing night, when Montoni and his companions should be engaged at their carousals.

"But the chevalier desired me, signora, to go to you immediately, and to beg you would allow him to visit you this night, if it was only for a moment, for that he could no longer live under the same roof without seeing you: the hour, he said, he could not mention, for it must depend on circumstances (just as you said, signora); and the place he desired you would appoint, as knowing which was best for your own safety."

It was settled, therefore, that the chevalier should meet her in the corridor, at that hour of the night, which Lodovico, who was to be upon the watch, should judge safest: and Emily, as may be imagined, passed this interval in a tumult of hope and joy, anxiety and impatience.

At length the clock struck twelve; she opened the door to listen if any noise was in the castle, and heard only distant shouts of riot and laughter echoing feebly along the gallery. Having softly closed the door, she passed the room with impatient steps. Annette, whom she detained, was in the meantime as loquacious as usual.

Soon after she heard steps in the corridor;—they were the light quick steps of hope; she could scarcely support herself as they approached; but, opening the door of the apartment, she advanced to meet Valancourt, and in the next moment sank in the arms of a stranger. His voice—his countenance instantly convinced her, and she fainted away.

On reviving, she found herself supported by the stranger, who was watching over her recovery with a countenance of ineffable tenderness and anxiety. She had no spirits for reply, or inquiry; she asked no questions, but burst into tears, and disengaged herself from his arms; when the expression of his countenance changed to surprise and disappointment, and he turned to Ludovico for an explanation. Annette soon gave the information, which Ludovico could not. "Oh, sir!" said she, in a voice interrupted with sobs; "oh, sir, you are not the other chevalier. We expected M. Valancourt, but you are not he! O Ludovico! how could you deceive us so? my poor lady will never recover it—never!"

"If you, sir," said Ludovico, addressing the stranger, "would

but have had the goodness to trust me with your name, this mistake had been avoided." "Most true," replied the stranger, speaking in broken Italian; "but it was of the utmost consequence to me that my name should be concealed from Montoni. —Madame," added he, then addressing Emily in French, "will you permit me to apologize for the pain I have occasioned you, and to explain to you alone my name, and the circumstance that has led me into this error ? I am of France;—I am your countryman;—we are met in a foreign land." Emily tried to compose her spirits; yet she hesitated to grant his request. At length, desiring that Ludovico would wait on the staircase, and detaining Annette, she told the stranger that her woman understood very little of Italian, and begged he would communicate what he wished to say in that language.—Having withdrawn to a distant part of the corridor, he said, with a long-drawn sigh, "You, madame, are no stranger to me, though I am so unhappy as to be unknown to you.—My name is Du Pont; I am of France, of Gascony, your native province, and have long admired—and why should I affect to disguise it ?—have long loved you." He paused, but in the next moment proceeded. "My family, madame, is probably not unknown to you, for we lived within a few miles of La Vallée, and I have sometimes had the happiness of meeting you on visits in the neighbourhood. I will not offend you by repeating how much you interested me; how much I loved to wander in the scenes you frequented; how often I visited your favourite fishing-house, and lamented the circumstance which at that time forbade me to reveal my passion. I will not explain how I surrendered to temptation, and became possessed of a treasure which was to me inestimable; a treasure which I committed to your messenger a few days ago."

Emily now interrupted him. "I think, sir, I may leave it to your integrity to determine, whether, after what has just appeared concerning M. Valancourt, I ought to return the picture. I think you will acknowledge that this would not be generosity; and you will allow me to add, that it would be doing myself an injustice.

"But you will excuse me for reminding you of the danger
u incur by prolonging this interview."—M. Du Pont took her
nd, which she but feebly attempted to withdraw, and pressed
respectfully to his lips. "Allow me to breathe another fervent
h for your happiness," said he, "and to applaud myself for
affection which I cannot conquer." As he said this, Emily
ard a noise from her apartment, and, turning round, saw the
or from the staircase open, and a man rush into her chamber.
will teach you to conquer it," cried he, as he advanced into
e corridor, and drew a stiletto, which he aimed at Du Pont,
no was unarmed, but who stepping back, avoided the blow,
d then sprung upon Verezzi, from whom he wrenched the
letto. While they struggled in each other's grasp, Emily,
llowed by Annette, ran farther into the corridor, calling on
udovico, who was, however, gone from the staircase; and as
e advanced, terrified and uncertain what to do, a distant noise
at seemed to arise from the hall, reminded her of the danger
e was incurring; and sending Annette forward in search of
udovico, she returned to the spot where Du Pont and Verezzi
ere still struggling for victory. She threw herself in a chair,
d supplicated them to desist from further violence, till at
ngth Du Pont forced Verezzi to the floor, where he lay
unned by the violence of his fall; and she then entreated Du
ont to escape from the room, before Montoni or his party
ould appear: but he still refused to leave her unprotected; and
nile Emily, now more terrified for him than for herself,
forced the entreaty, they heard steps ascending the private
aircase.

"O, you are lost!" cried she; "these are Montoni's people."
u Pont made no reply, but supported Emily, while with a
eady though eager countenance he waited their appearance,
d in the next moment Ludovico alone mounted the landing-
ace. Throwing a hasty glance around the chamber, "Follow
e," said he, "as you value your lives; we have not an instant
lose!"

Emily inquired what had occurred, and whither they were to
.

"I cannot stay to tell you now, signora," replied Ludovico: "fly ! fly !"

She immediately followed him, accompanied by M. Du Pont, down the staircase, and along a vaulted passage, when suddenly she recollected Annette, and inquired for her. "She awaits us further on, signora," said Ludovico; almost breathless with haste: "the gates were open, a moment since, to a party just come in from the mountains; they will be shut, I fear, before we can reach them ! Through this door, signora," added Ludovico, holding down the lamp; "take care, here are two steps."

Emily followed, trembling still more than before she had understood that her escape from the castle depended on the present moment; while Du Pont supported her, and endeavoured, as they passed along, to cheer her spirits.

Ludovico now opened another door, where they found Annette; and the party then descended a short flight of steps into a passage, which, Ludovico said, led round the inner court of the castle, and opened into the outer one. As they advanced, confused and tumultuous sounds, that seemed to come from the inner court, alarmed Emily. "Nay, signora," said Ludovico, "our only hope is in that tumult; while the signor's people are busied about the men who are just arrived, we may perhaps pass unnoticed through the gates. But hush !" he added, as they approached the small door that opened into the outer court; "if you will remain here a moment, I will go to see whether the gates are open, and anybody is in the way. Pray extinguish the light, signor, if you hear me talking," continued Ludovico, delivering the lamp to Du Pont, "and remain quite still."

Saying this, he stepped out upon the court, and they closed the door, listening anxiously to his departing steps. No voice, however, was heard in the court which he was crossing, though a confusion of many voices yet issued from the inner one.

But soon they heard Ludovico speaking loud, and the voice also of some other person, and Du Pont immediately extinguished the lamp. "Ah ! it is too late !" exclaimed Emily—" what is to become of us ?" They listened again, and then per-

eived that Ludovico was talking with a sentinel. They heard Ludovico say, "I'll watch the gates the while."

"Stay a minute," replied the sentinel, "and you need not have the trouble; for the horses will be sent round to the outer stables, then the gates will be shut, and I can leave my post."

"I don't mind the trouble, comrade," said Ludovico, "you will do such another good turn for me, some time. Go—go, and fetch the wine; the rogues that are just come in will drink it all else."

"Hold, hold; not so fast," cried the sentinel; "do watch then for a moment; I'll be with you presently."

"Take your time, I am in no haste," replied Ludovico, who was already hurrying across the court to the door of the passage where Emily was sinking under the anxiety this long discourse had occasioned; but on his telling them the court was clear, they followed him to the gates, without waiting another instant; yet not before he had seized two horses that had strayed from the second court, and were picking a scanty meal along the grass which grew between the pavement of the first.

They passed without interruption the dreadful gates, and took the road that led down among the woods, Emily, M. Du Pont, and Annette on foot, and Ludovico, who was mounted on one horse, leading the other. Having reached them, they stopped while Emily and Annette were placed on horseback with their two protectors; when, Ludovico leading the way, they set off as fast as the broken road, and the feeble light which a rising moon threw among the foliage, would permit.

Emily was so much astonished by this sudden departure, that she scarcely dared to believe herself awake; and she yet much doubted whether this adventure would terminate in escape—a doubt which had too much probability to justify it; for before they quitted the woods, they heard shouts in the wind, and, on emerging from them, saw lights moving quickly near the castle above. Du Pont whipped his horse, and with some difficulty compelled him to go faster.

"Ah ! poor beast," said Ludovico, "he is weary enough ; he

has been out all day : but, signor, we must fly for it, now ; for yonder are the lights coming this way."

Having given his own horse a lash, they now both set off on a full gallop ; and when they again looked back, the lights were so distant as scarcely to be discerned, and the voices were sunk into silence. The travellers then abated their pace ; and, consulting whither they should direct their course, it was determined they should descend into Tuscany, and endeavour to reach the Mediterranean, where they could readily embark for France. Thither Du Pont meant to attend Emily, if he should learn that the regiment he had accompanied into Italy was returned to his native country.

They were now in the road which Emily had travelled with Ugo and Bertrand; but Ludovico, who was the only one of the party acquainted with the passes of these mountains, said that a little farther on, a by-road branching from this would lead them down into Tuscany with very little difficulty ; and that at a few leagues' distance was a small town where necessaries could be procured for their journey.

The moon was now risen high over the woods that hung upon the sides of the narrow glen through which they wandered, and afforded them light sufficient to distinguish their way, and to avoid the loose and broken stones that frequently crossed it. They now travelled leisurely, and in profound silence ; for they had scarcely yet recovered from the astonishment into which this sudden escape had thrown them.

At length lights were perceived twinkling on the side of a mountain, and Ludovico had no doubt that they proceeded from the town he had mentioned ; while his companions, satisfied by this assurance, sank again into silence. Annette was the first who interrupted this. "Holy Peter !" said she, "what shall we do for money on our journey ? for I know neither I nor my lady have a single sequin; the signor took care of that !"

This remark produced a serious inquiry, which ended in as serious an embarrassment, for Du Pont had been rifled of nearly all his money when he was taken prisoner ; and Ludovico, who had for some time found a difficulty in procuring any part of

ne wages due to him, had now scarcely cash sufficient to pro-
ure necessary refreshment at the first town in which they
ould arrive.

The travellers, however, had only to proceed and dare the
ture.

At length, from a distance was heard the faint tinkling of
sheep-bell, and soon after the bleat of flocks; and the party
ien knew that they were near some human habitation ; for
ne light which Ludovico had fancied to proceed from a town
ad long been concealed by intervening mountains.

The morning light now glimmering in the horizon, showed
aintly, at a little distance upon the brow of a hill which seemed
o peep from "under the opening eyelids of the morn," the
own they were in search of, and which they soon after reached.
t was not without some difficulty that they there found a house
hich could afford shelter for themselves and their horses; and
mily desired they might not rest longer than was necessary
or refreshment.

Ludovico, on examining his purse, found it even insufficient
o supply present refreshment; and Du Pont at length ventured
o inform the landlord, whose countenance was simple and
onest, of their exact situation, and requested that he would
ssist them to pursue their journey; a purpose which he pro-
ised to comply with, as far as he was able, when he learned
ey were prisoners escaping from Montoni, whom he had too
uch reason to hate. But though he consented to lend them fresh
orses to carry them to the next town, he was too poor himself
o trust them with money ; and they were again lamenting their
overty, when Ludovico, who had been with his tired horses to
ne hovel which served for a stable, entered the room half
rantic with joy, in which his auditors soon participated. On
emoving the saddle from one of the horses, he had found be-
eath it a small bag, containing, no doubt, the booty of one of
ne *condottieri,* who had returned from a plundering excursion
ist before Ludovico left the castle, and whose horse, having
rayed from the inner court while his master was engaged in

drinking, had brought away the treasure which the ruffian had considered the reward of his exploit.

On counting over this, Du Pont found that it would be more than sufficient to carry them all to France, where he now determined to accompany Emily, whether he should obtain intelligence of his regiment or not.

He now consulted them concerning the seaport to which they should direct their way ; and Ludovico, better informed of the geography of the country, said that Leghorn was the nearest port of consequence, which Du Pont knew also to be the most likely of any in Italy to assist their plan, since from thence vessels of all nations were continually departing. Thither, therefore, it was determined that they should proceed.

Emily having purchased a little straw hat, such as was worn by the peasant girls of Tuscany, and some other little necessary equipments for the journey, and the travellers having exchanged their tired horses for others better able to carry them, recommenced their joyous way as the sun was rising over the mountains ; and after travelling through the romantic country for several hours, began to descend into the vale of Arno.

The intense heat, for it was now noon, obliged the travellers to look out for a shady recess, where they might rest for a few hours. Soon after, they turned from the road into a grove whose thick foliage entirely excluded the sunbeams, and where a spring, gushing from the rock, gave coolness to the air. The repast being over, Du Pont recommended Emily to endeavour to sleep during these sultry hours, and desiring the servants would do the same, said he would watch the while ; but Ludovico wished to spare him this trouble ; and Emily and Annette, wearied with travelling, tried to repose, while he stood guard with his trombone.

When Emily, refreshed by slumber, awoke, she found the sentinel asleep on his post, and Du Pont awake, but lost in melancholy thought. As the sun was yet too high to allow them to continue their journey, and as it was necessary that Ludovico, after the toils and trouble he had suffered, should finish his

eep, Emily took this opportunity of inquiring by what acci-
nt Du Pont became Montoni's prisoner.

"I came into Italy, madame," said Du Pont, "in the service
my country. In an adventure among the mountains, our
arty, engaging with the bands of Montoni, was routed, and I,
ith a few of my comrades, was taken prisoner. When they
ld me whose captive I was, the name of Montoni struck me ;
r I remembered that Madame Cheron, your aunt, had mar-
ed an Italian of that name, and that you had accompanied
em into Italy. It was not, however, till some time after, that I
came convinced that this was the same Montoni, or learned
at you, madame, was under the same roof with myself. I will
t pain you by describing what were my emotions upon this
iscovery, which I owed to a sentinel, whom I had so far won
y interest, that he granted me many indulgences, one of which
as very important to me, and somewhat dangerous to himself ;
ut he persisted in refusing to convey any letter, or notice of
y situation, to you ; for he justly dreaded a discovery, and
e consequent vengeance of Montoni. He however enabled me
see you more than once. You are surprised, madame : and I
ill explain myself. My health and spirits suffered extremely
om want of air and exercise ; and at length I gained so far
pon the pity, or the avarice of the man, that he gave me the
eans of walking on the terrace."

Emily now listened with very anxious attention to the nar-
tive of Du Pont, who proceeded :

"In granting this indulgence, he knew that he had nothing to
pprehend from a chance of my escaping from a castle which
as vigilantly guarded, and the nearest terrace of which rose
ver a perpendicular rock : he showed me also," continued Du
ont, "a door concealed in the cedar wainscot of the apartment
here I was confined, which he instructed me how to open ; and
hich, leading into a passage formed within the thickness of
e wall that extended far along the castle, finally opened in an
bscure corner of the eastern rampart. I have since been in-
rmed that there are many passages of the same kind concealed
ithin the prodigious walls of that edifice, and which were

undoubtedly contrived for the purpose of facilitating escapes in time of war. Through this avenue, at the dead of night, I often stole to the terrace, where I walked with the utmost caution, lest my steps should betray me to the sentinels on duty in distant parts; for this end of it, being guarded by high buildings, was not watched by soldiers. In one of these midnight wanderings I saw light in a casement that overlooked the rampart, and which, I observed, was immediately over my prison chamber. It occurred to me, that you might be in that apartment; and, with the hope of seeing you, I placed myself opposite to the window."

Emily, remembering the figure that had formerly appeared on the terrace, and which had occasioned her so much anxiety, exclaimed. "It was you, then, M. Du Pont, who occasioned me much foolish terror ! My spirits were at that time so much weakened by long suffering, that they took alarm at every hint." Du Pont, after lamenting that he had occasioned her any apprehension, added : "As I rested on the wall opposite to your casement, the consideration of your melancholy situation, and of my own, called from me involuntary sounds of lamentation, which drew you, I fancy, to the casement : I saw there a person whom I believed to be you. Oh ! I will say nothing of my emotion at that moment ; I wished to speak, but prudence restrained me, till the distant footstep of the sentinel compelled me suddenly to quit my station.

"It was some time before I had another opportunity of walking, for I could only leave my prison when it happened to be the turn of one man to guard me; meanwhile I became convinced, from some circumstances related by him, that your apartment was over mine; and when again I ventured forth, I returned to your casement, where again I saw you, but without daring to speak. I waved my hand, and you suddenly disappeared; then it was that I forgot my prudence, and yielded to lamentation; again you appeared—you spoke—I heard the well-known accent of your voice ! and at that moment my discretion would have forsaken me again, had I not heard also the approaching steps of a soldier, when I instantly quitted the

lace, though not before the man had seen me. He followed own the terrace, and gained so fast upon me that I was comelled to make use of a stratagem, ridiculous enough, to save nyself. I had heard of the superstition of many of these men, nd I uttered a strange noise, with a hope that my pursuer ould mistake it for something supernatural, and desist from ursuit. Luckily for myself, I succeeded ; the man, it seems, as subject to fits, and the terror he suffered threw him into ne, by which accident I secured my retreat. A sense of the anger I had escaped, and the increased watchfulness which ny appearance had occasioned among the sentinels, deterred ne ever after from walking on the terrace ; but in the stillness of ight I frequently beguiled myself with an old lute, procured or me by a soldier, which I sometimes accompanied with my oice, and sometimes, I will acknowledge, with a hope of makng myself heard by you: but it was only a few evenings ago hat this hope was answered ; I then thought I heard a voice n the wind, calling me; yet even then, I feared to reply, lest the entinel at the prison-door should hear me. Was I right, madme, in this conjecture—was it you who spoke ?"

"Yes," said Emily with an involuntary sigh; "you were right ndeed."

Du Pont, observing the painful emotions which this question evived, now changed the subject. "In one of my excursions hrough the passage which I have mentioned, I overheard a ingular conversation," said he.

"In the passage !" said Emily, with surprise.

"I heard it in the passage," said Du Pont ; "but it proceeded rom an apartment adjoining the wall, within which the pasage wound, and the shell of the wall was there so thin, and was lso somewhat decayed, that I could distinctly hear every word poken on the other side. It happened that Montoni and his ompanions were assembled in the room, and Montoni began o relate the extraordinary history of the lady his predecessor n the castle. He did, indeed, mention some very surprising ircumstances, and whether they were strictly true, his conscience must decide ; I fear it will determine against him. But

you, madame, have doubtless heard the report, which he designs should circulate, on the subject of that lady's mysterious fate."

"I have, sir," replied Emily, "and I perceive that you doubt it."

"I doubted it before the period I am speaking of," rejoined Du Pont; "but some circumstances, mentioned by Montoni, greatly contributed to my suspicions. The account I then heard almost convinced me that he was a murderer. I trembled for you ; the more so that I had heard the guests mention your name in a manner that threatened your repose ; and, knowing that the most impious men are often the most superstitious, I determined to try whether I could not awaken their consciences, and awe them from the commission of the crime I dreaded. I listened closely to Montoni, and in the most striking passages of his story I joined my voice, and repeated his last words in a disguised and hollow tone."

"But was you not afraid of being discovered ?" said Emily.

"I was not," replied Du Pont ; "for I knew that if Montoni had been acquainted with the secret of this passage, he would not have confined me in the apartment to which it led. I knew also, from better authority, that he was ignorant of it. The party for some time appeared inattentive to my voice ; but at length were so much alarmed that they quitted the apartment; and having heard Montoni order his servants to search it, I returned to my prison, which was very distant from this part of the passage."

M. Du Pont and Emily thus continued to converse of Montoni, and then of France, and of the plan of their voyage ; when Emily told him that it was her intention to retire to a convent in Languedoc, where she had been formerly treated with much kindness, and from thence to write to her relation M. Quesnel, and inform him of her conduct. There she designed to wait till La Vallée should again be her own.

They continued to converse till the sun was declining in the west, when Du Pont awoke Ludovico, and they set forward on their journey.

The travellers crossed the Arno by moonlight, at a ferry ;

nd learning that Pisa was distant only a few miles down the ver, they set out on their wearied horses for that city. As they pproached it, the vale expanded into a plain variegated with ineyards, corn, olives, and mulberry groves ; but it was late efore they reached its gates. As soon as they had reached the n, the travellers retired early to rest, after the fatigues of is day, and on the following, rose early ; and pursued their urney, in the cooler hours, through a charming country rich ith wine, and corn, and oil. The Apennines, no longer awful, r even grand, here softened into the beauty of sylvan and astoral landscape : and Emily, as she descended them, looked own delighted on Leghorn, and its spacious bay filled with essels and crowned with these beautiful hills.

M. Du Pont, immediately on their arrival, went down to the uay, where he heard of several French vessels, and of one that as to sail in a few days for Marseilles ; from whence another essel could be procured, without difficulty, to take them cross the Gulf of Lyons, towards Narbonne, on the coast, not any leagues from which city he understood the convent was ated to which Emily wished to retire. He therefore immedi- tely engaged with the captain to take them to Marseilles, and mily was delighted to hear that her passage to France was ecured. At Leghorn, also, Du Pont heard of his regiment, and at it had embarked for France ; a circumstance which gave im great satisfaction, for he could now accompany Emily ither.

CHAPTER XVIII

We now return to Languedoc, and to the mention of Count e Villefort, the nobleman who succeeded to an estate of the Marquis de Villeroi situated near the monastery of St. Claire. t may be recollected, that this château was uninhabited when t. Aubert and his daughter were in the neighbourhood, and at the former was much affected on discovering himself to e so near Château-le-Blanc, a place concerning which the good

old La Voisin afterwards dropped some hints that had alarmed Emily's curiosity.

It was in the year 1584, the beginning of that in which St. Aubert died, that Francis Beauveau, Count de Villefort, came into possession of the mansions and extensive domain called Château-le-Blanc, situated in the province of Languedoc, on the shore of the Mediterranean. This estate, which during some centuries had belonged to his family, now descended to him on the decease of his relative the Marquis de Villeroi, who had been latterly a man of reserved manners and austere character; circumstances which, together with the duties of his profession, that often called him into the field, had prevented any degree of intimacy with his cousin, the Count de Villefort. For many years they had known little of each other, and the count received the first intelligence of his death, which happened in a distant part of France, together with the instruments that gave him possession of the domain of Château-le-Blanc ; but it was not till the following year that he determined to visit that estate, when he designed to pass the autumn there.

During many years the château had been abandoned by the late marquis, and, being inhabited only by an old steward and his wife, had been suffered to fall much into decay. To superintend the repairs that would be requisite to make it a comfortable residence, had been a principal motive with the count for passing the autumnal months in Languedoc; and neither the remonstrances nor the tears of the countess, for on urgent occasions she could weep, were powerful enough to overcome his determination. She prepared therefore, to obey the command which she could not conquer, and to resign the gay assemblies of Paris—where her beauty was generally unrivalled, and won the applause to which her wit had but feeble claim—for the twilight canopy of woods, the lonely grandeur of mountains, and the solemnity of Gothic halls, and of long, long galleries which echoed only the solitary step of a domestic, or the measured clink that ascended from the great clock—the ancient monitor of the hall below.

The count had a son and a daughter, the children of a former

arriage, who he designed should accompany him to the south France ; Henri, who was in his twentieth year, was in the ench service ; and Blanche, who was not yet eighteen, had en hitherto confined to the convent, where she had been aced immediately on her father's second marriage. The present untess, who had neither sufficient ability nor inclination to superintend the education of her daughter-in-law, had vised this step ; and the dread of superior beauty had since ged her to employ every art that might prevail on the count prolong the period of Blanche's seclusion ; it was therefore th extreme mortification that she now understood he would longer submit on this subject.

On the morning which commenced the journey, the postilions pped at the convent, by the count's order, to take up Blanche, hose heart beat with delight at the prospect of novelty and eedom now before her. Inattentive to a conversation which as passing between the countess and a Mademoiselle Bearn r friend, Blanche sat, lost in pleasing reverie, as she watched e clouds floating silently along the blue expanse, now veiling e sun and stretching their shadows along the distant scene, d then disclosing all his brightness.

It was on the evening of the seventh day that the travellers me within view of the Château-le-Blanc, the romantic beauty whose situation strongly impressed the imagination of anche, who observed with sublime astonishment the Pyrean mountains, which had been seen only at a distance during e day, now rising within a few leagues, with their wild cliffs d immense precipices, which the evening clouds, floating und them, now disclosed, and again veiled. The plains of nguedoc, blushing with the purple vine, and diversified with oves of mulberry, almond, and olives, spread far to the north d east; to the south appeared the Mediterranean, clear as ystal, and blue as the heavens it reflected, bearing on its bosom ssels, whose white sails caught the sunbeam, and gave animaon to the scene. On a high promontory, washed by the waters the Mediterranean, stood her father's mansion, almost cluded from the eye by woods.

As Blanche drew nearer, the Gothic features of this ancient mansion successively appeared—first an embattled turret rising above the trees—then the broken arch of an immense gateway retiring beyond them.

The carriages stopped at a gate which led into the domain of the château, but which was now fastened ; and the great bell, that had formerly served to announce the arrival of strangers, having long since fallen from its station, a servant climbed over a ruined part of the adjoining wall, to give notice to those within of the arrival of their lord.

The gates being at length unbarred, the carriage moved slowly on under spreading chestnuts that almost excluded the remains of day, following what had been formerly a road, but which now, overgrown with luxuriant vegetation, could be traced only by the boundary formed by trees on either side, and which wound for near half a mile among the woods before it reached the château.

"What a dismal place is this !" exclaimed the countess as the carriage penetrated the deeper recesses of the woods.

The carriage now stopped at the château, where at the door of the great hall appeared the old steward and the Parisian servants who had been sent to prepare the château, waiting to receive their lord. Lady Blanche now perceived that the edifice was not built entirely in the Gothic style, but that it had additions of a more modern date ; the large and gloomy hall, however, into which she now entered, was entirely Gothic ; and sumptuous tapestry, which it was now too dark to distinguish, hung upon the walls, and depicted scenes from some of the ancient Provençal romances.

While the countess inquired for refreshment, the count attended by his son, went to look over some part of the château and Lady Blanche reluctantly remained to witness the discontent and ill humour of her stepmother.

"How long have you lived in this desolate place ?" said her ladyship to the old housekeeper, who came to pay her duty.

"Above twenty years, your ladyship, on the next feast of St. Jerome."

"How happened it that you have lived here so long, and most alone, too? I understood that the château had been ut up for some years?"

"Yes, madame, it was for many years after my late lord, the unt, went to the wars; but it is above twenty years since I nd my husband came into his service. The place is so large, nd has of late been so lonely, that we were lost in it, and fter some time we went to live in a cottage at the end of the oods, near some of the tenants, and came to look after the hâteau every now and then. When my lord returned to France rom the wars, he took a dislike to the place, and never came to ve here again, and so he was satisfied with our remaining at ne cottage. Alas—alas! how the château is changed from what once was! What delight my late lady used to take in it! well remember when she came here a bride, and how fine it as. Now it has been neglected so long, and is gone into such ecay! I shall never see those days again."

Lady Blanche, it being not yet dark, took this opportunity of xploring new scenes; and leaving the parlour, she passed from ne hall into a wide gallery, whose walls were decorated by arble pilasters, which supported an arched roof composed of rich mosaic work.

The gallery terminated in a saloon, to which the window she ad seen through an open door belonged; but the increasing usk permitted her only an imperfect view of this apartment, hich seemed to be magnificent, and of modern architecture; nough it had been either suffered to fall into decay or had ever been properly finished. The gloom and silence of the aloon somewhat awed her; and having sought the door of the allery, and pursued for a considerable time a dark passage, ne came to a hall, but one totally different from that she had rmerly seen. By the twilight admitted through an open portico ne could just distinguish this apartment to be of very light nd airy architecture, and that it was paved with white marble, illars of which supported the roof that rose into arches built n the Moorish style. While Blanche stood on the steps of this ortico, the moon rose over the sea, and gradually disclosed in

partial light the beauties of the eminence on which she stood, whence a lawn, now rude and overgrown with high grass, sloped to the woods, that, almost surrounding the château, extended in a grand sweep down the southern sides of the promontory to the very margin of the ocean.

The soft and shadowy tints that overspread the scene, the waves undulating in the moonlight, and their low and measured murmurs on the beach were circumstances that united to elevate the unaccustomed mind of Blanche to enthusiasm.

The fatigues of the day made the party separate at an early hour ; when Blanche retired through a long oak gallery to her chamber, whose spacious and lofty walls, high antiquated casements, and, what was the effect of these, its gloomy air, did not reconcile her to its remote situation in this ancient building. The furniture also was of ancient date ; the bed was of blue damask trimmed with tarnished gold lace, and its lofty tester rose in the form of a canopy, whence the curtains descended. To Blanche, every object here was matter of curiosity ; and, taking the light from her woman to examine the tapestry, she perceived that it represented scenes from the walls of Troy, though the almost colourless worsted now mocked the glowing actions they once had painted.

Having given her woman a strict injunction to awaken her before sunrise, she dismissed her ; and then, to dissipate the gloom which reflection had cast upon her spirits, opened one of the high casements, and was again cheered by the face of living nature. At this casement she remained till the glooms of midnight were stretched over the prospect. She then retired to her pillow, and, "with gay visions of to-morrow," to those sweet slumbers which health and happy innocence only know.

Blanche's slumbers continued till long after the hour which she had so impatiently anticipated ; for her woman, fatigued with travelling, did not call her till breakfast was nearly ready. Her disappointment, however, was instantly forgotten, when on opening the casement she saw on the one hand, the wide sea sparkling in the morning rays, with its stealing sails and glancing oars; and on the other, the fresh woods, the plains far

retching, and the blue mountains, all glowing with the splen-
our of the day.

Soon after breakfast the party dispersed. The count, ordering
is steward to attend him in the library, went to survey the
ondition of his premises, and to visit some of his tenants;
Henri hastened with alacrity to the shore to examine a boat
hat was to bear them on a little voyage in the evening, and to
uperintend the adjustment of a silk awning; while the coun-
ess, attended by Mademoiselle Bearn, retired to an apartment
n the modern side of the château, which was fitted up with
ry elegance: and as the windows opened upon balconies that
ronted the sea, she was there saved from a view of the *horrid*
yrenees.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, hastened to indulge, amidst
he wild wood-walks around the château, her new enthusiasm,
here, as she wandered under the shades, her gay spirits gradu-
lly yielded to pensive complacency.

When Lady Blanche returned to the château, instead of
oing to the apartment of the countess, she amused herself with
andering over that part of the edifice which she had not yet
xamined, of which the most ancient first attracted her curiosi-
y: for though what she had seen of the modern was gay and
egant, there was something in the former more interesting to
er imagination. Having passed up the great staircase and
hrough the oak gallery, she entered upon a long suite of cham-
ers, whose walls were either hung with tapestry or wainscoted
ith cedar, the furniture of which looked almost as ancient as
he rooms themselves; the spacious fire-places, where no mark
f social cheer remained, presented an image of cold desolation;
nd the whole suite had so much the air of neglect and desertion,
hat it seemed as if the venerable persons whose portraits hung
pon the walls had been the last to inhabit them.

On leaving these rooms, she found herself in another gallery,
he end of which was terminated by a back staircase, and the
ther by a door that seemed to communicate with the north side
f the château, but which being fastened, she descended the
aircase, and, opening a door in the wall a few steps down,

found herself in a small square room that formed part of the west turret of the castle.

Having left the turret and descended the narrow staircase, she found herself in a dusky passage, where she wandered, unable to find her way, till impatience yielded to apprehension, and she called for assistance. Presently steps approached and light glimmered through a door at the other extremity of the passage, which was opened with caution by some person who did not venture beyond it, and whom Blanche observed in silence, till the door was closing, when she called aloud, and, hastening towards it, perceived the old housekeeper.

"Dear ma'amselle, is it you?" said Dorothée. "How could you find your way hither?" Had Blanche been less occupied by her own fears, she would probably have observed the strong expressions of terror and surprise on Dorothée's countenance, who now led her through a long succession of passages and rooms, that looked as if they had been uninhabited for a century, till they reached that appropriated to the housekeeper, where Dorothée entreated she would sit down and take refreshment. To Lady Blanche's inquiry of whither the door she had found fastened led, she replied, that it opened to a suite of rooms which had not been entered during many years; "for," added she, "my late lady died in one of them, and I could never find in my heart to go into them since."

Blanche, though she wished to see those chambers, forbore on observing that Dorothée's eyes were filled with tears, to ask her to unlock them, and soon after went to dress for dinner, at which the whole party met in good spirits and good humour.

The cheerfulness with which Blanche rejoined the party vanished on her reaching the margin of the sea; and it was by a strong effort that she so far overcame her fears as to follow her father into the boat.

A light breeze played on the water and on the silk awning of the boat, and waved the foliage of the receding woods that crowned the cliffs for many miles, and which the count surveyed with the pride of conscious property, as well as with the eye of taste.

At some distance among these woods stood a pavilion, which
ıd once been the scene of social gaiety, and which its situation
ll made one of romantic beauty. Thither the count had or-
ered coffee and other refreshments to be carried; and thither
e sailors now steered their course, following the windings of
e shore round many a woody promontory and circling bay ;
hile the pensive tones of horns and other wind instruments,
ayed by the attendants in a distant boat, echoed among the
cks, and died along the waves.

After near an hour's rowing, the party landed, and ascended
little path overgrown with vegetation. At a little distance
om the point of the eminence, within the shadowy recess of
e woods, appeared the pavilion, which Blanche perceived, as
e caught a glimpse of its portico between the trees, to be
ilt of variegated marble.

The pavilion had been prepared as far as was possible on a
ry short notice, for the reception of its visitors ; but the faded
lours of its painted walls and ceiling, and the decayed dra-
ry of its once magnificent furniture, declared how long it
ıd been neglected and abandoned to the empire of the chang-
g seasons. While the party partook of a collation of fruit
ıd coffee, the horns, placed in a distant part of the woods
here an echo sweetened and prolonged their melancholy tones,
oke softly on the stillness of the scene.

After wandering for some time, the party returned to the
ore, and embarked ; and, the beauty of the evening tempting
em to extend their excursion, they proceeded farther up the
y. A dead calm had succeeded the light breeze that wafted
em hither, and the men took to their oars.

Above the darkness of the woods, Blanche now caught a
ıster of high towers touched with the splendour of the setting
ys ; and soon after, the horns being then silent, she heard the
int swell of choral voices from a distance.

"What voices are those upon the air ?" said the count, looking
und and listening ;—but the strain had ceased. "It seemed
be a vesper hymn which I have often heard in my convent,"
id Blanche.

"We are near the monastery, then," observed the count; and the boat soon after doubling a lofty headland, the monastery of St. Claire appeared, seated near the margin of the sea.

All without was silent and forsaken: but while Blanche gazed with admiration on this venerable pile, whose effect was heightened by the strong lights and shadows thrown athwart it by a cloudy sunset, a sound of many voices, slowly chanting, arose from within. The count bade his men rest on their oars. While a rapt stillness prevailed in the boat, a train of friars, and then of nuns veiled in white, issued from the cloisters, and passed under the shade of the woods to the main body of the edifice.

The count, looking up, now perceived that the twilight of evening was anticipated by an approaching storm. In the east a tempest was collecting: a heavy gloom came on, opposing and contrasting the glowing splendour of the setting sun. The boatmen pulled hard at their oars. But the thunder that now muttered at a distance, and the heavy drops that began to dimple the water, made the count determine to put back to the monastery for shelter; and the course of the boat was immediately changed.

The boat having reached the lawn before the monastery, the count sent a servant to announce his arrival, and to entreat shelter of the Superior; who soon after appeared at the great gate attended by several monks. The party immediately disembarked; and having hastily crossed the lawn—for the shower was now heavy—were received at the gate by the Superior; who, as they entered, stretched forth his hand and gave his blessing; and they passed into the great hall, where the lady abbess waited, attended by several nuns clothed, like herself, in black, and veiled in white. The veil of the abbess was, however, throw half back, and discovered a countenace whose chaste dignity was sweetened by the smile of welcome with which she addressed the countess, whom she led with Blanche and Mademoiselle Bearn into the convent parlour, while the

ount and Henri were conducted by the Superior to the refec-
ory.

While the lady abbess ordered refreshment, and conversed
ith the countess, Blanche withdrew to a window, the lower
anes of which being without painting, allowed her to observe
ne progress of the storm over the Mediterranean. The scene
as in deep gloom, except where a sunbeam, darting between
ne clouds, touched the swelling sail of a vessel which was seen
bouring in the storm. Blanche for some time anxiously
atched the progress of the bark as it threw the waves in foam
round it ; and, as the lightnings flashed, looked to the opening
eavens with many a sigh for the fate of the poor mariners.

Meanwhile some of the count's servants, having gone by land
o the château for carriages, returned soon after vespers had
oncluded ; when, the storm being somewhat abated, the count
nd his family returned home.

On their arrival at the château, the countess, affecting more
atigue than she really felt, withdrew to her apartment, and
ne count, with his daughter and Henri, went to the supper-
oom ; where they had not been long when they heard, in a
ause of the gust, a firing of guns, which the count understand-
ng to be signals of distress from some vessel in the storm, went
o a window that opened towards the Mediterranean, to observe
urther ; but the sea was now involved in utter darkness, and
ne loud howlings of the tempest had again overcome every
ther sound. Blanche, remembering the bark which she had
efore seen, now joined her father with trembling anxiety. In
few moments the report of guns was again borne along the
ind, and as suddenly wafted away ; a tremendous burst of
hunder followed ; and in the flash that had preceded it, and
hich seemed to quiver over the whole surface of the water,
vessel was discovered, tossing amidst the white foam of the
aves, at some distance from the shore. Impenetrable dark-
ess again involved the scene ; but soon a second flash showed
ne bark, with one sail unfurled, driving towards the coast.
lanche hung upon her father's arm with looks full of the
gony of united terror and pity ; which were unnecessary to

awaken the heart of the count, who gazed upon the sea with a piteous expression, and, perceiving that no boat could live in the storm, forbore to send one ; but he gave orders to his people to carry torches out upon the cliff—hoping they might prove a kind of beacon to the vessel, or at least warn the crew of the rocks they were approaching. While Henri went out to direct on what part of the cliffs the lights should appear, Blanche remained with her father at the window.

The count's servants were now seen running to and fro on the rocks ; some venturing almost to the points of the crags, and bending over, held out their torches fastened to long poles. Sudden shouts from the people on the rocks increased the anxiety of Blanche to an almost intolerable degree ; but her suspense concerning the fate of the mariners was soon over, when Henri, running breathless into the room, told that the vessel was anchored in the bay below, but in so shattered a condition, that it was feared she would part before the crew could disembark. The count immediately gave orders for his own boats to assist in bringing them to shore, and that such of these unfortunate strangers as could not be accommodated in the adjacent hamlet, should be entertained at the château. Among the latter were Emily St. Aubert, M. Du Pont, Ludovico, and Annette ; who, having embarked at Leghorn, and reached Marseilles, were from thence crossing the Gulf of Lyons when this storm overtook them. They were received by the count with his usual benignity ; who, though Emily wished to have proceeded immediately to the monastery of St. Claire, would not allow her to leave the château that night ; and, indeed, the terror and fatigue she had suffered would scarcely have permitted her to go farther.

In M. Du Pont the count discovered an old acquaintance, and much joy and congratulation passed between them ; after which Emily was introduced by name to the count's family, whose hospitable benevolence dissipated the little embarrassment which her situation had occasioned her ; and the party were soon seated at the supper-table. The unaffected kindness of Blanche, and the lively joy she expressed on the escape of

he strangers, for whom her pity had been so much interested, radually revived Emily's languid spirits.

Annette, meanwhile, in the servants' hall was telling of all he dangers she had encountered, and congratulating herself so eartily upon her own and Ludovico's escape, and on her resent comforts, that she often made all that part of the hâteau ring with merriment and laughter.

Emily withdrew early to seek the repose she so much required; ut her pillow was long a sleepless one. On this her return o her native country, many interesting remembrances were wakened; all the events and sufferings she had experienced ince she quitted it, came in long succession to her fancy, and vere chased only by the image of Valancourt. She determined o inform him on the following day of her arrival in France ; vhich it was scarcely possible he could know but by a letter rom herself : and after soothing her spirits with the hope of oon hearing that he was well and unchanged in his affections, he at length sank to repose.

CHAPTER XIX

The Lady Blanche was so much interested for Emily, that pon hearing that she was going to reside in the neighbouring onvent, she requested the count would invite her to lengthen er say at the château. He had observed Emily with attention on he preceding evening, and was as much pleased with her as it vas possible he could be with any person on so short an cquaintance ; but, extremely cautious as to those whom he ntroduced to the intimacy of his daughter, he determined, on earing that the former was no stranger at the convent of St. Claire, to visit the abbess ; and, if her account corresponded vith his wish, to invite Emily to pass some time at the château.

On the following morning Emily was too much fatigued to ppear ; but M. Du Pont was at the breakfast-table when the ount entered the room ; who pressed him, as his former ac- uaintance, and the son of a very old friend, to prolong his

stay at the château—an invitation which Du Pont willingly accepted, since it would allow him to be near Emily.

Emily, when she was somewhat recovered, wandered with her new friend over the grounds belonging to the château, as much delighted with the surrounding views, as Blanche, in the benevolence of her heart, had wished ; from thence she perceived, beyond the woods, the towers of the monastery, and remarked that it was to this convent she designed to go.

"Ah !" said Blanche with surprise, "I am but just released from a convent, and would you go into one ? If you could know what pleasure I feel in wandering here at liberty, and in seeing the sky, and the fields, and the woods all around me, I think you would not." Emily, smiling at the warmth with which the Lady Blanche spoke, observed, that she did not mean to confine herself to a convent for life.

When they returned to the château, Lady Blanche conducted Emily to her favourite turret : and from thence they rambled through the ancient chambers, which Blanche had visited before. Emily was amused by observing the structure of these apartments, and the fashion of their old, but still magnificent furniture. She was also interested by Dorothée the housekeeper, who attended them ; whose appearance was almost as antique as the objects around her, and who seemed no less interested by Emily ; on whom she frequently gazed with so much deep attention, as scarcely to hear what was said to her.

While Emily looked from one of the casements, she perceived, with surprise, some objects that were familiar to her memory—the fields and woods with the gleaming brook, which she had passed with La Voisin, one evening, soon after the death of M. St. Aubert, in her way from the monastery to the cottage ; and she now knew this to be the château which he had then avoided, and concerning which he had dropped some remarkable hints.

Shocked by this discovery, yet scarcely knowing why, she mused for some time in silence, and remembered the emotion which her father had betrayed on finding himself so near this mansion, and some other circumstances of his conduct, that

now greatly interested her. The music, too, which she had formerly heard, and respecting which La Voisin had given such an odd account, occurred to her ; and desirous of knowing more concerning it, she asked Dorothée whether it returned at midnight, as usual, and whether the musician had yet been discovered.

"Yes, ma'amselle," replied Dorothée : "that music is still heard ; but the musician has never been found out, nor ever will, I believe ; though there are some people who can guess."

"Indeed ! said Emily: "then why do they not pursue the inquiry ?"

"Ah, young lady ! inquiry enough has been made—but who can pursue a spirit ?"

Emily smiled, and remembering how lately she had suffered herself to be led away by superstition, determined now to resist its contagion ; yet, in spite of her efforts, she felt awe mingled with her curiosity on this subject ; and Blanche, who had hitherto listened in silence, now inquired what this music was, and how long it had been heard.

"Ever since the death of my lady, madame," replied Dorothée.

"Why, the place is not haunted, surely ?" said Blanche, between jesting and seriousness.

"I have heard that music almost ever since my dear lady died," continued Dorothée, "and never before then. But that is nothing to some things I could tell of."

"Do, pray, tell them then," said Lady Blanche, now more in earnest than in jest ; "I am much interested ; for I have heard Sister Henriette and Sister Sophie, in the convent, tell of such strange appearances which they themselves had witnessed."

"You never heard, my lady, I suppose, what made us leave the château, and go and live in a cottage ?" said Dorothée.

"Never !" replied Blanche with impatience.

"Nor the reason that my lord the marquis——"

Dorothée checked herself, hesitated, and then endeavoured to change the topic ; but the curiosity of Blanche was too much awakened to suffer the subject thus easily to escape her, and

she pressed the old housekeeper to proceed with her account : upon whom, however, no entreaties could prevail ; and it was evident that she was alarmed for the imprudence into which she had already betrayed herself.

"I perceive," said Emily smiling, "that all old mansions are haunted ; I am lately come from a place of wonders ; but unluckily since I left it, I have heard almost all of them explained."

Blanche was silent ; Dorothée looked grave, and sighed ; and Emily felt herself still inclined to believe more of the wonderful than she chose to acknowledge. Just then she remembered the spectacle she had witnessed in a chamber of Udolpho, and, by an odd kind of coincidence, the alarming words that had met her in the MS. papers which she had destroyed in obedience to the command of her father ; and she shuddered at the meaning they seemed to impart, almost as much as at the horrible appearence disclosed by the black veil.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, unable to prevail with Dorothée to explain the subject of her late hints, had desired, on reaching the door that terminated the gallery, and which she found fastened on the preceding day, to see the suite of rooms beyond. "Dear young lady," said the housekeeper, "I have told you my reason for not opening them : I have never seen them since my dear lady died ; and it would go hard with me to see them now. Pray, madame, do not ask me again."

"Certainly I will not," replied Blanche, "if that is really your objection."

"Alas ! it is," said the old woman ; "we all loved her well, and I shall always grieve for her." She paused ; but afterwards, as they walked up the gallery, added of Emily, "This young lady sometimes brings the late marchioness to my mind : I can remember when she looked just as blooming, and very like her when she smiles. Poor lady ! how gay she was when she first came to the château !"

"And was she not gay afterwards ?" said Blanche.

Dorothée shook her head ; and Emily observed her with eyes strongly expressive of the interest she now felt. "Let us sit down in this window," said the Lady Blanche, on reaching the

opposite end of the gallery : "and pray, Dorothée, if it is not painful to you, tell us something more about the marchioness."

"No, my lady," replied Dorothée : "if you knew as much as I do, you would not. I often wish I could shut it out, but it will rise to my mind. I see my dear lady on her death-bed—her very look—and remember all she said:—it was a terrible scene !"

"Why was it so terrible ?" said Emily with emotion.

"Ah, dear young lady ! is not death always terrible ?" replied Dorothée.

To some further inquiries of Blanche, Dorothée was silent ; and Emily, observing the tears in her eyes, forbore to urge the subject, and endeavoured to withdraw the attention of her young friend to some object in the gardens ; where the count with the countess and M. Du Pont appearing, they went down to join them.

When he perceived Emily, he advanced to meet her, and presented her to the countess in a manner so benign, that it recalled most powerfully to her mind the idea of her late father; and she felt more gratitude to him than embarrassment towards the countess : who, however, received her with one of those fascinating smiles which her caprice sometimes allowed her to assume, and which was now the result of a conversation the count had held with her concerning Emily. Whatever this might be, or whatever had passed in his conversation with the lady abbess, whom he had just visited, esteem and kindness were strongly apparent in his manner when he addressed Emily ; who experienced that sweet emotion which arises from the consciousness of possessing the approbation of the good; for to the count's worth she had been inclined to yield her confidence almost from the first moment in which she had seen him.

Before she could finish her acknowledgments for the hospitality she had received, and mention of her design of going immediately to the convent, she was interrupted by an invitation to lengthen her stay at the château; which was pressed by the count and the countess, with an appearance of such friendly sincerity that though she much wished to see her old friends

at the monastery, and to sigh once more over her father's grave, she consented to remain a few days at the château.

To the abbess, however, she immediately wrote mentioning her arrival in Languedoc, and her wish to be received into the convent as a boarder : she also sent letters to M. Quesnel, and to Valancourt, whom she merely informed of her arrival in France ; and, as she knew not where the latter might be stationed, she directed her letter to his brother's seat in Gascony.

During these the first days of her stay at Château-le-Blanc, she was often affected by observing the deep but silent melancholy which at times stole over Du Pont ; and Emily, pitying the self-delusion which disarmed him of the will to depart, determined to withdraw herself as soon as the respect she owed the Count and Countess de Villefort would permit. The dejection of his friend soon alarmed the anxiety of the count ; to whom Du Pont at length confided the secret of his hopeless affection ; which, however, the former could only commiserate, though he secretly determined to befriend his suit, if an opportunity of doing so should ever occur. Considering the dangerous situation of Du Pont, he but feebly opposed his intention of leaving Château-le-Blanc on the following day, but drew from him a promise of a longer visit when he could return with safety to his peace.

In a few days Emily also left the château ; but not before the count and countess had received her promise to repeat her visit very soon.

Some time after her return to the monastery, she received a letter from her uncle, M. Quesnel, in answer to information that she had arrived in France, and to her inquiries concerning such of her affairs as he had undertaken to conduct during her absence, especially as to the period for which La Vallée had been let : whither it was her wish to return, if it should appear that her income would permit her to do so. The reply of M. Quesnel was cold and formal as she expected, expressing neither concern for the evils she had suffered, nor pleasure that she was now removed from them. On Emily's pecuniary concerns he was not very explicit ; he informed her, however,

hat the term for which La Vallée had been engaged was nearly xpired ; but, without inviting her to his own house, added, hat her circumstances would by no means allow her to reside here, and earnestly advised her to remain for the present in he convent of St. Claire. To her inquiries respecting poor old Theresa, her late father's servant, he gave no answer. In the ostscript to his letter, M. Quesnel mentioned M. Motteville, n whose hands the late St. Aubert had placed the chief of his ersonal property, as being likely to arrange his affairs nearly o the satisfaction of his creditors, and that Emily would recover nuch more of her fortune than she had formerly reason to xpect. The letter also enclosed to Emily an order upon a nerchant at Narbonne for a small sum of money.

The Lady Blanche, meanwhile, who was left much alone, ecame impatient for the company of her new friend. The ount, observing her dissatisfaction, readily yielded to her ntreaties, and reminded Emily of her promised visit. But the ilence of Valancourt, which was now prolonged far beyond he period when a letter might have arrived from Estuvière, ppressed Emily with severe anxiety, and rendering her averse o society, she would willingly have deferred her acceptance of his invitation till her spirits should be relieved. The count and is family, however, pressed to see her. At length, therefore, he returned upon a second visit to Château-le-Blanc. Here the riendly manner of Count de Villefort encouraged Emily to nention to him her situation respecting the estates of her late unt, and to consult him on the means of recovering them. He ad little doubt that the law would decide in her favour ; and, dvising her to apply to it, offered, first, to write to an advocate t Avignon, on whose opinion he thought he could rely.

One evening old Dorothée entered the room, to inform her hat dinner would be ready an hour before the usual time. Emily started on perceiving her, and hastily put up the papers he was reading ; but not before Dorothée had observed both er agitation and her tears.

"Ah, ma'amselle !" said she, "you, who are so young,—have ou reason for sorrow ?"

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Emily tried to smile, but was unable to speak.

"Alas, dear young lady ! when you come to my age, you will not weep at trifles ;—and surely you have nothing serious to grieve you ?"

"No, Dorothée ; nothing of any consequence," replied Emily. Dorothée, now stooping to pick up something that had dropped from among the papers, suddenly exclaimed,—"Holy Mary ! what is it I see ?—" and then, trembling, sat down in a chair that stood by the table.

"What is it you do see ?" said Emily, alarmed by her manner, and looking round the room.

"It is herself !" said Dorothée ; "her very self ! just as she looked a little before she died !"

Emily, still more alarmed, began now to fear that Dorothée was seized with sudden frenzy ; but entreated her to explain herself.

"That picture !" said she ; "where did you find it, lady ?—It is my blessed mistress herself !"

She laid on the table the miniature which Emily had so long ago found among the papers her father had enjoined her to destroy, and over which she had once seen him shed such tender and affecting tears ; and recollecting all the various circumstances of his conduct that had long perplexed her, her emotions increased to an excess which deprived her of all power to ask the questions she trembled to have answered ; and she could only inquire, whether Dorothée was certain the picture resembled the late marchioness ?

"Oh, ma'amselle !" said she, "how came it to strike me so the instant I saw it, if it was not my lady's likeness ? Ah !" added she, taking up the miniature, "these are her own blue eyes—looking so sweet and so mild ! and there is her very look, such as I have often seen it, when she had sat thinking for a long while ; and then the tears would often steal down her cheeks, —but she never would complain ! It was that look, so meek, as it were, and resigned, that used to break my heart, and make me love her so !"

"Dorothée !" said Emily solemnly, "I am interested in the

ause of that grief—more so, perhaps, than you may imagine ; nd I entreat that you will no longer refuse to indulge my uriosity—it is not a common one."

As Emily said this, she remembered the papers with which he picture had been found, and had scarcely a doubt that they ad concerned the Marchioness de Villeroi : but with this supposition came a scruple, whether she ought to inquire further n a subject which might prove to be the same that her father ad so carefully endeavoured to conceal. Her curiosity conerning the marchioness, powerful as it was, it is probable she vould now have resisted, as she had formerly done on unwarily bserving the few terrible words in the papers, which had ever since been erased from her memory, had she been certain hat the history of that lady was the subject of those papers, r that such simple particulars only as is was probable Dorothée ould relate, were included in her father's command. What was known to her, could be no secret to many other persons; and ince it appeared very unlikely that St. Aubert should attempt o conceal what Emily might learn by ordinary means, she at ength concluded that, if the papers had related to the story f the marchioness, it was not those circumstances of it which Dorothée could disclose, that he had thought sufficiently important to wish to have concealed : she therefore no longer heitated to make the inquiries that might lead to the gratification f her curiosity.

"Ah, ma'amselle !" said Dorothée, "it is a sad story, and annot be told now ;—but what am I saying ?—I never will ell it. Many years have passed since it happened ; and I never oved to talk of the marchioness to anybody but my husband. He lived in the family at that time, as well as myself, and he new many particulars from me which nobody else did ; for I vas about the person of my lady in her last illness, and saw and eard as much, or more than my lord himself. Sweet saint ! ow patient she was ! When she died, I thought I could have ied with her."

"Dorothée," said Emily, interrupting her, "what you shall ell, you may depend upon it, shall never be disclosed by me.

I have, I repeat it, particular reasons for wishing to be informed on this subject, and am willing to bind myself, in the most solemn manner, never to mention what you shall wish me to conceal."

Dorothée seemed surprised at the earnestness of Emily's manner, and, after regarding her for some moments in silence, said, "Young lady ! that look of yours pleads for you—it is so like my dear mistress's, that I can almost fancy I see her before me : if you were her daughter, you could not remind me of her more. But dinner will be ready; had you not better go down ?"

"You will first promise to grant my request," said Emily.

"Well, lady !" replied Dorothée after a long pause, during which her eyes were fixed upon Emily, "you seem so much interested—and this picture, and that face of yours, make me think you have some reason to be so,—that I will trust you, and tell some things that I never told before to anybody but my husband, though there are people who have suspected as much. I will tell you the particulars of my lady's death, too, and some of my own suspicions ; but you must first promise me, by all the saints——"

Emily, interrupting her, solemnly promised never to reveal what should be confided to her without Dorothée's consent.

"But there is the horn, ma'amselle, sounding for dinner," said Dorothée : "I must be gone."

"When shall I see you again ?" inquired Emily.

Dorothée mused, and then replied, "Why, madame, it may make people curious, if it is known I am so much in your apartment ; and that I should be sorry for ; so I will come when I am least likely to be observed. I have little leisure in the day, and I shall have a good deal to say ; so, if you please, ma'am, I will come when the family are all in bed."

"That will suit me very well," replied Emily ; "remember then, to-night——"

"Aye, that is well remembered," said Dorothée : "I fear I cannot come to-night, madame ; for there will be the dance of the vintage, and it will be late before the servants go to rest ; for when they once set in to dance, they will keep it up, in the

cool of the air, till morning : at least, it used to be so in my ime."

Emily then hastened to the dining-room.

In the evening, the count with all his family, except the ountess and Mademoiselle Bearn, went to the woods to witness he festivity of the peasants.

The count was highly delighted with the happiness he witnessed, to which his bounty had largely contributed ; and the Lady Blanche joined the dance with a young gentleman of her father's party. Du Pont requested Emily's hand ; but her spirits were too much depressed to permit her to engage in the present festivity, which called to her remembrance that of the preceding year, when St. Aubert was living, and of the melancholy scenes which had immediately followed it.

Overcome by these recollections, she at length left the spot and walked slowly into the woods, where the softened music, floating at a distance, soothed her melancholy mind.

At length she found herself near the avenue which, on the night of her father's arrival, Michael had attempted to pass in search of a house, she therefore turned back ; and was hastily pursuing her way to the dancers, when she heard steps approaching from the avenue; and being still beyond the call of the peasants on the green, for she could neither hear their voices nor their music, she quickened her pace: but the persons following gained fast upon her ; and at length distinguishing the voice of Henri, she walked leisurely till he came up. He expressed some surprise at meeting her so far from the company: and on her saying that the pleasant moonlight had beguiled her to walk farther than she intended, an exclamation burst from the lips of his companion, and she thought she heard Valancourt speak ! It was indeed he ! and the meeting was such as may be imagined, between persons so affectionate, and so long separated, as they had been.

In the joy of these moments Emily forgot all her past sufferings ; and Valancourt seemed to have forgotten that any person but Emily existed ; while Henri was a silent and astonished spectator of the scene.

Valancourt asked a thousand questions concerning herself and Montoni, which there was no time to answer; but she learned that her letter had been forwarded to Paris, while he was on the way to Gascony; where, however, at length, it informed him of her arrival in France; and he had immediately set out for Languedoc. On reaching the monastery whence she had dated this letter, he found, to his extreme disappointment, that the gates were already closed for the night ; and believing that he should not see Emily till the morrow, he was returning to his little inn, with the intention of writing to her, when he was overtaken by Henri, with whom he had been intimate at Paris, and was led to her whom he was secretly lamenting that he should not see till the following day.

Emily, with Valancourt and Henri, now returned to the green ; where the latter presented Valancourt to the count ; who, she fancied, received him with less than his usual benignity, though it appeared that they were not strangers to each other. He was invited, however, to partake of the diversion of the evening ; and when he had paid his respects to the count, and while the dancers continued their festivity, he seated himself by Emily, and conversed without restraint. The lights which were hung among the trees under which they sat, allowed her a more perfect view of the countenance she had so frequently in absence endeavoured to recollect, and she perceived with some regret that it was not the same as when last she saw it. There was all its wonted intelligence and fire ; but it had lost much of the simplicity, and somewhat of the open benevolence, that used to characterize it. Still, however, it was an interesting countenance ; but Emily thought she perceived, at intervals, anxiety contract, and melancholy fix, the features of Valancourt : sometimes, too, he fell into a momentary musing, and then appeared anxious to dissipate thought; while at others, as he fixed his eyes on Emily, a sudden kind of horror seemed to cross his mind. In her he perceived the same goodness and beautiful simplicity that had charmed him on their first acquaintance. The bloom of her countenance was somewhat faded, but all its sweetness re-

mained; and it was rendered more interesting than ever, by the faint expression of melancholy that sometimes mingled with her smile.

Valancourt and Emily now joined the Lady Blanche, and the party soon after sat down with the count, his son, and the Chevalier Du Pont, at a banquet spread under a gay awning beneath the trees. At a table also were seated several of the most venerable of the count's tenants ; and it was a festive repast—to all but Valancourt and Emily. When the count retired to the château, he did not invite Valancourt to accompany him ; who, therefore, took leave of Emily, and retired to his solitary inn for the night.

On the following day, when the count had accidentally joined Emily in one of the walks, they talked of the festival of the preceding evening ; and this led him to a mention of Valancourt. "That is a young man of talent," said he ; "you were formerly acquainted with him, I perceive ?" Emily said that she was. "He was introduced to me at Paris," said the count, "and I was much pleased with him on our first acquaintance." He paused, and Emily trembled, between the desire of hearing more and the fear of showing the count that she felt an interest on the subject. "May I ask," said he at length, "how long you have known M. Valancourt ?" "Will you allow me to ask your reason for the question, sir ?" said she; "and I will answer it immediately." "Certainly," said the Count; "that is but just: I will tell you. I cannot but perceive that M. Valancourt admires you. In that, however, there is nothing extraordinary : every person who sees you must do the same. I am above using commonplace compliments : I speak with sincerity. What I fear is, that he is a favoured admirer !"—"Why do you fear it, sir ?" said Emily, endeavouring to conceal her emotion.—"Because," replied the count, "I think him not worthy of your favour." Emily, greatly agitated, entreated further explanation. "I will give it," said he, "if you will believe that nothing but a strong interest in your welfare could induce me to hazard that assertion."—"I must believe so, sir," replied Emily.

"The chevalier and my son," said he, "were introduced to each other at the table of a brother officer ; at whose house I also met him, and invited him to my own whenever he should be disengaged. I did not then know that he had formed an acquaintance with a set of men, a disgrace to their species, who live by plunder, and pass their lives in continual debauchery. I knew several of the chevalier's family resident at Paris, and considered them as sufficient pledges for his introduction to my own. But you are ill ; I will leave the subject."—"No, sir," said Emily; "I beg you will proceed: I am only distressed" —*"Only !"* said the count with emphasis. "However, I will proceed. I soon learned that these, his associates, had drawn him into a course of dissipation, from which he appeared to have neither the power nor the inclination, to extricate himself. He lost large sums at the gaming-table ; he became infatuated with play ; and was ruined. I spoke tenderly of this to his friends, who assured me that they had remonstrated with him till they were weary. I afterwards learned that, in consideration of his talents for play, which were generally successful when unopposed by the tricks of villainy—that in consideration of these, the party had initiated him into the secrets of their trade, and allotted him a share of their profits. Nothing short of conviction, and a regard for your welfare, could have urged me to repeat these unpleasant reports."

A long pause of silence ensued, during which he was visibly agitated. At length he said, "It would be a cruel delicacy that could prevail with me to be silent—and I will inform you that the chevalier's extravagance has brought him twice into the prisons of Paris ; from whence he was last extricated, as I was told upon authority which I cannot doubt, by a well-known Parisian countess, with whom he continued to reside when I left Paris."

He paused again : and, looking at Emily, perceived her countenance change, and that she was falling from the seat : he caught her, but she had fainted and he called loud for aid.

It was long, however, before she revived, and then she found herself supported—not by the count—but by Valancourt, who

was observing her with looks of earnest apprehension, and who now spoke to her in a tone tremulous with his anxiety. At the sound of his well-known voice, she raised her eyes; but presently closed them, and a faintness again came over her.

The count, with a look somewhat stern, waved him to withdraw ; but he only sighed heavily, and called on the name of Emily, as he again held the water that had been brought to her lips. When she again revived, she yielded to the weakness of tears : but she soon restrained them ; and, exerting her resolution to appear recovered, she rose, thanked the count and Henri, with whom Valancourt had entered the garden, for their care, and moved towards the château without noticing Valancourt ; who, heartstruck by her manner, exclaimed in a low voice—"Good God ! how have I deserved this ?—what has been said to occasion this change ?"

Emily, without replying, but with increased emotion, quickened her steps. "What has thus disordered you, Emily ?" said he, as he still walked by her side : "give me a few moments' conversation, I entreat you ;—I am very miserable !"

Though this was spoken in a low voice, it was overheard by the count ; who immediately replied, that Mademoiselle St. Aubert was then too much indisposed to attend to any conversation, but that he would venture to promise she would see M. Valancourt on the morrow, if she was better.

Valancourt's cheek was crimsoned. When they reached the door of the château, he lingered a moment, for his resentment was now fled ; and then, with a look so expressive of tenderness and grief that Emily's heart was not proof against it, he bade her good morning, and, bowing slightly to the count, disappeared.

CHAPTER XX

In the evening, when Emily was at length informed that Count de Villefort requested to see her, she guessed that Valancourt was below ; and endeavouring to assume composure and to recollect all her spirits, she rose and left the apartment.

She found in the library Valancourt seated with the count, who both rose on her entrance ; but she did not dare to look at Valancourt ; and the count, having led her to a chair, immediately withdrew.

At length, in a tremulous voice, he said, "I have solicited to see you this evening, that I might, at least, be spared the further torture of suspense, which your altered manner had occasioned me, and which the hints I have just received from the count have in part explained. I perceive I have enemies, Emily, who envied me of my late happiness, and who have been busy in searching out the means to destroy it ; I perceive too, that time and absence have weakened the affection you once felt for me, and that you can now easily be taught to forget me."

His last words faltered ; and Emily, less able to speak than before, continued silent.

"Oh, what a meeting is this !" exclaimed Valancourt starting from his seat, and pacing the room with hurried steps ; "what a meeting is this, after our long—long separation !" Again he sat down, and after the struggle of a moment, he added in a firm but despairing tone, "This is too much—I cannot bear it ! Emily, will you not speak to me ?"

He covered his face with his hand, as if to conceal his emotion, and took Emily's which she did not withdraw. Her tears could no longer be restrained ; and when he looked up, and perceived that she was weeping, all his tenderness returned, and a gleam of hope appeared to cross his mind, for he exclaimed, "Oh ! you do pity me, then, you do love me ! Yes, you are still my own Emily—let me believe those tears that tell me so !"

Emily now made an effort to recover her firmness, and, hastily drying them, "Yes," said she, "I do pity you—I weep for you ; but ought I to think of you with affection ? You may remember that yester evening I said I had still sufficient confidence in your candour to believe, that when I should request an explanation of your words you would give it. This explanation is now unnecessary, I understand them too well ; but prove, at least, that your candour is deserving of the con-

fidence I give it, when I ask you, whether you are conscious of being the same estimable Valancourt—whom I once loved."

"Once loved!" cried he—"the same—the same!" He paused in extreme emotion, and then added, in a voice at once solemn and dejected—"No—I am not the same!—I am lost—I am no longer worthy of you!"

"Spare me the necessity," said Emily, recollecting her fortitude, "spare me the necessity of mentioning those circumstances of your conduct which oblige me to break our connexion for ever. We must part—I now see you for the last time."

"This is the count's determination," said he haughtily, "not yours, and I shall inquire by what authority he interferes between us." He now rose, and walked about the room in great emotion.

"Let me save you from this error," said Emily, not less agitated—"it is my determination, and, if you reflect a moment on your late conduct you will perceive that my future peace requires it."

"Your future peace requires that we should part—part for ever!" said Valancourt, "how little did I ever expect to hear you say so!"

"And how little did I expect that it would be necessary for me to say so!" rejoined Emily, while her voice softened into tenderness, and her tears flowed again—"that you—you, Valancourt, would ever fall from my esteem!"

Valancourt, returning to the chair beside her, at length said, in a subdued voice, "This true, I am fallen—fallen from my own esteem; but could you, Emily, so soon, so suddenly resign, if you had not before ceased to love me, or if your conduct was not governed by the designs, I will say the selfish designs, of another person? Would you not otherwise be willing to hope for my reformation—and could you bear, by estranging me from you, to abandon me to misery—to myself!"—Emily wept aloud.—"No, Emily—no—you would not do this if you still loved me. You would find your own happiness in saving mine."

"You are indeed distracted," said Emily, "the count is not your enemy; on the contrary he is my friend, and that might in some degree induce you to consider him as yours."—"Your friend !" said Valancourt hastily : "how long has he been your friend, that he can so easily make you forget your lover ? Was it he who recommended to your favour M. Du Pont, who, you say, accompanied you from Italy, and who, I say, has stolen your affections ? But I have no right to question you ;—you are your own mistress. Du Pont, perhaps, may not long triumph over my fallen fortunes !" Emily, more frightened than before by the frantic looks of Valancourt, said in a tone scarcely audible, "For Heaven's sake be reasonable—be composed ! M. Du Pont is not your rival, nor is the count his advocate. You have no rival ; nor, except yourself, an enemy. My heart is wrung with anguish, which must increase while your frantic behaviour shows me more than ever, that you are no longer the Valancourt I have been accustomed to love."

He made no reply but sat with his arms rested on the table, and his face concealed by his hands; while Emily stood silent and trembling, wretched for herself, and dreading to leave him in this state of mind.

"My fortitude is gone," said Valancourt at length ; "I can no longer even struggle to recall it. I cannot now leave you—I cannot bid you an eternal farewell : say, at least, that you will see me once again." Emily's heart was somewhat relieved by the request, and she endeavoured to believe that she ought not to refuse it. Yet she was embarrassed by recollecting that she was a visitor in the house of the count, who would not be pleased by the return of Valancourt. Other considerations, however, soon overcame this ; and she granted his request, on the condition that he would neither think of the count as his enemy, nor Du Pont as his rival. He then left her, with a heart so much lightened by this short respite, that he almost lost every former sense of misfortune.

Emily withdrew to her own room that she might compose her spirits and remove the traces of her tears.

Her mind was now so entirely occupied by nearer interests,

hat she forgot the old housekeeper, and the promised history vhich so lately had excited her curiosity, but which Dorothée vas probably not very anxious to disclose ; for night came, he hours passed, and she did not appear in Emily's chamber.

Valancourt meanwhile suffered the tortures of remorse and lespair. When, on the receipt of her letter, he set out for Lanuedoc, he then knew that his own folly had involved him in uin, and it was no part of his design to conceal this from her. But he lamented only the delay which his ill conduct must ive to their marriage, and did not foresee that the informaion could induce her to break their connexion for ever. In the norning he sent to know at what hour she would see him ; and is note arrived when she was with the count, who had sought n opportunity of again conversing with her of Valancourt ; or he perceived the extreme distress of her mind, and feared nore than ever that her fortitude would desert her. Emily aving dismissed the messenger, the count returned to the ubject of their late conversation, urging his fear of Valanourt's entreaties, and again pointing out to her the lengthened nisery that must ensue if she should refuse to encounter some present uneasiness. His repeated arguments could, indeed, alone ave protected her from the affection she still felt for Valanourt, and she resolved to be governed by them.

The hour of interview at length arrived. Emily went to it at east with composure of manner ; but Valancourt was so much gitated, that he could not speak for several minutes, and his irst words were alternately those of lamentation, entreaty, nd self-reproach. Afterwards he said, "Emily, I have loved ou—I do love you better than my life ; but I am ruined by ny own conduct. Yet I would seek to entangle you in a conexion that must be miserable for you, rather than subject nyself to the punishment which is my due—the loss of you. I m a wretch, but I will be a villain no longer. I will not endeavur to shake your resolution by the pleading of a selfish assion. I resign you, Emily, and will endeavour to find onsolation in considering that, though I am miserable, you t least, may be happy. The merit of the sacrifice is indeed, not

my own, for I should never have attained strength of mind to surrender you, if your prudence had not demanded it."

Emily was somewhat comforted by this assurance. "We are now parting for ever," said she ; "but, if my happiness is dear to you, you will always remember, that nothing can contribute to it more than to believe that you have recovered your own esteem." Valancourt took her hand—his eyes were covered with tears, and the farewell he would have spoken was lost in sighs. After a few moments Emily said with difficulty and emotion, "Farewell, Valancourt, may you be happy !"

He bade Emily adieu, pressed her hands to his lips, looked at her for the last time, and hurried out of the room.

CHAPTER XXI

We now return to the mention of Montoni, whose rage and disappointment were soon lost in nearer interests than any which the unhappy Emily had awakened. His depredations having exceeded their usual limits, and reached an extent at which neither the timidity of the then commercial senate of Venice, nor their hope of his occasional assistance, would permit them to connive,—the same effort, it was resolved, should complete the suppression of his power and the correction of his outrages. While a corps of considerable strength was upon the point of receiving orders to march for Udolpho, a young officer, prompted partly by the hope of distinction, solicited an interview with the minister who directed the enterprise. To him he represented that the situation of Udolpho rendered it too strong to be taken by open force, except after some tedious operations ; that Montoni had lately shown how capable he was of adding to its strength all the advantages which could be derived from the skill of a commander; that so considerable a body of troops as that allotted to the expedition could not approach Udolpho without his knowledge ; and that it was not for the honour of the republic to have a large part of its regular force employed, for such a time as the siege of Udolpho would require, upon the attack of a

handful of banditti. The object of the expedition, he thought, might be accomplished much more safely and speedily by mingling contrivance with force. It was possible to meet Montoni and his party without their walls, and to attack them then ; or, by approaching the fortress with the secrecy consistent with the march of smaller bodies of troops, to take advantage either of the treachery or negligence of some of the party, and to rush unexpectedly upon the whole, even in the castle of Udolpho.

This advice was seriously attended to, and the officer who gave it received the command of the troops demanded for his purpose. His first efforts were accordingly those of contrivance alone. In the neighbourhood of Udolpho he waited till he had secured the assistance of the *condottieri,* of whom he found none that he addressed unwilling to punish their imperious master, and to secure their own pardon from the senate. He learned also the number of Montoni's troops, and that it had been much increased since his last successes. The conclusion of his plan was soon affected. Having returned with his party, who received the watchword and other assistance from their friends within, Montoni and his officers were surprised by one division, who had been directed to their apartment, while the other maintained the slight combat which preceded the surrender of the whole garrison. Among the persons seized with Montoni, was Orsino, the assassin, who had joined him on his first arrival at Udolpho, and whose concealment had been made known to the senate by Count Morano, after the unsuccessful attempt of the latter to carry Emily. It was indeed partly for the purpose of capturing this man, by whom one of the senate had been murdered, that the expedition was undertaken ; and its success was so acceptable to them, that Morano was instantly released, notwithstanding the political suspicions which Montoni, by his secret accusation, had excited against him. The celerity and ease with which this whole transaction was completed, prevented it from attracting curiosity, or even from obtaining a place in any of the published records of that time ; so that Emily,

who remained in Languedoc, was ignorant of the defeat and signal humiliation of her late persecutor.

It was long before she could sufficiently abstract her mind from Valancourt to listen to the story promised by old Dorothée, concerning which her curiosity had once been so deeply interested; but Dorothée at length reminded her of it, and Emily desired that she would come that night to her chamber.

Still her thoughts were employed by considerations which weakened her curiosity ; and Dorothée's tap at the door, soon after twelve, surprised her as much, as if it had not been appointed.

Emily now drew her chair near to Dorothée, who went on : "It is about twenty years since my lady marchioness came as bride to the château. Oh ! I well remember how she looked when she came into the great hall, where we servants were all assembled to welcome her, and how happy my lord the marquis seemed. Ah ! who would have thought then ?—But, as I was saying, ma'amselle, I thought the marchioness, with all her sweet looks, did not look happy at heart ; and so I told my husband, and he said it was all fancy : so I said no more, but I made my remarks for all that. My lady marchioness was then about your age, and, as I have often thought, very like you. Well ! my lord the marquis kept open house for a long time, and gave such entertainments, and there was such gay doings, as have never been in the château since. I was younger, ma'amselle, then, than I am now, and was as gay as the best of them. I remember I danced with Philip the butler, in a pink gown with yellow ribbons, and a coif, not such as they wear now, but plaited high with ribbons all about it. It was very becoming truly:—my lord the marquis noticed me. Ah ! he was a goodnatured gentleman then—who would have thought that he——"

"But the marchioness, Dorothée," said Emily ; "you was telling me of her."

"Oh, yes, my lady marchioness ;—I thought she did not seem happy at heart ; and once, soon after the marriage, I

ught her crying in her chamber ; but when she saw me she ied her eyes, and pretended to smile. I did not dare then to k what was the matter ; but the next time I saw her crying, did, and she seemed displeased—so I said no more. I found t, some time after, how it was. Her father, it seems, had mmanded her to marry my lord the marquis for his money, d there was another nobleman, or else a chevalier, that she ked better, and that was very fond of her ; and she fretted r the loss of him, I fancy; but she never told me so. My dy always tried to conceal her tears from the marquis ; for I ve often seen her, after she had been so sorrowful, look so lm and sweet when he came into the room ! But my lord, all a sudden, grew gloomy and fretful, and very unkind some- nes to my lady. This afflicted her very much, as I saw, for e never complained ; and she used to try so sweetly to lige him, and to bring him into a good humour, that my art has often ached to see it. But he used to be stubborn, and ve her harsh answers ; and then, when she found it all in in, she would go to her own room, and cry so !—I used to ar her in the ante-room, poor dear lady ! but I seldom ven- red to go to her. I used sometimes to think my lord was alous. To be sure, my lady was greatly admired, but she was o good to deserve suspicion. Among the many chevaliers that sited at the château, there was one that I always thought emed just suited for my lady ; he was so courteous, yet so irited; and there was such a grace, as it were, in all he did said. I always observed that whenever he had been there, e marquis was more gloomy and my lady more thoughtful ; d it came into my head that this was the chevalier she ought have married, but I never could learn for certain."

"What was the chevalier's name, Dorothée ?" said Emily.

"Why, that I will not tell even to you, ma'amselle, for evil ay come of it. I once heard from a person, who is since dead, at the marchioness was not in law the wife of the marquis, r that she had before been privately married to the gentle- an she was so much attached to, and was afterwards afraid own it to her father, who was a very stern man; but this

seems very unlikely, and I never gave much faith to it. As I was saying, the marquis was most out of humour, as I thought, when the chevalier I spoke of had been at the château, and at last his ill treatment of my lady made her quite miserable. He would see hardly any visitors at the castle, and made her live almost by herself. I was her constant attendant, and saw all she suffered; but still she never complained.

"After matters had gone on thus for near a year, my lady was taken ill, and I thought her long fretting had made her so—but, alas! I fear it was worse than that."

"Hush, Dorothée, what sounds were those?" said Emily.

Dorothée changed countenance; and while they both listened, they heard on the stillness of the night, music of uncommon sweetness.

"I have surely heard that voice before!" said Emily at length.

"I have often heard it and at the same hour," said Dorothée solemny; "and if spirits ever bring music—that is surely the music of one!"

Emily, as the sounds drew nearer, knew them to be the same she had formerly heard at the time of her father's death; and whether it was the remembrance they now revived of that melancholy event, or that she was struck with superstitious awe, it is certain she was so much affected that she had nearly fainted.

"I think I once told you, madame," said Dorothée, "that I first heard this music soon after my lady's death: I well remember the night!"

"Hark! it comes again!" said Emily; "let us open the window and listen."

They did so; but soon the sounds floated gradually away into distance, and all was again still: they seemed to have sunk among the woods, whose tufted tops were visible upon the clear horizon, while every other feature of the scene was involved in the night shade, which, however, allowed the eye an indistinct view of some objects in the garden below.

"It is extraordinary," observed Emily, "that no person has et discovered the musician."

"Aye, ma'amselle, if it had been anything earthly it would ave been discovered long ago, but who could have courage o follow a spirit ? and if they had, what good could it do ?— or spirits, *you know*, ma'am, can take any shape or no shape; nd they will be here one minute, and the next perhaps, in a uite different place !"

"Pray resume your story of the marchioness," said Emily, nd acquaint me with the manner of her death."

"Yes, madame, my lord the marquis became more and more oomy; and my lady grew worse and worse, till one night e was taken very ill indeed. I was called up, and when I ame to her bedside I was shocked to see her countenance—it as so changed ! She looked piteously up at me, and desired would call the marquis again, for he was not yet come, and ll him she had something particular to say to him. At last e came; and he did, to be sure, seem very sorry to see her, ut he said very little. My lady told him she felt herself to be ying, and wished to speak with him alone; and then I left e room, but I shall never forget his look as I went.

"When I returned, I ventured to remind my lord about nding for a doctor, for I supposed he had forgot to do so his grief; but my lady said it was then too late: but my rd, so far from thinking so, seemed to think lightly of her isorder—till she was seized with such terrible pains ! Oh, I ever shall forget her shriek ! My lord then sent off a man nd horse for a doctor, and walked about the room and all ver the château in the greatest distress; and I stayed by my ear lady, and did what I could to ease her sufferings. She ad intervals of ease, and in one of these she sent for my lord gain; when he came I was going, but she desired I would not ave her. Oh ! I shall never forget what a scene passed—I can ardly bear to think of it now. My lord was almost distracted, r my lady behaved with so much goodness, and took such ains to comfort him, that if he ever had suffered a suspicion enter his head, he must now have been convinced he was

wrong. And to be sure he did seem to be overwhelmed with the thought of his treatment of her, and this affected her so much that she fainted away.

"We then got my lord out of the room; he went into his library, and threw himself on the floor, and there he stayed, and would hear no reason that was talked to him. When my lady recovered, she inquired for him; but afterwards said she could not bear to see his grief, and desired we would let her die quietly. She died in my arms, ma'amselle, and she went off as peacefully as a child, for all the violence of her disorder was passed."

"When the doctor came," resumed Dorothée—"alas! he came too late—he appeared greatly shocked to see her, for soon after her death a frightful blackness spread all over her face. When he had sent the attendants out of the room, he asked me several odd questions about the marchioness, particularly concerning the manner in which she had been seized: and he often shook his head at my answers, and seemed to mean more than he chose to say. But I understood him too well. However, I kept my remarks to myself, and only told them to my husband, who bade me hold my tongue. Some of the other servants, however, suspected what I did, and strange reports were whispered about the neighbourhood, but nobody dared to make any stir about them. When my lord heard that my lady was dead, he shut himself up, and would see nobody but the doctor, who used to be with him alone sometimes for an hour together: and after that the doctor never talked with me again about my lady. When she was buried in the church of the convent, at a little distance yonder (if the moon was up you might see the towers here, ma'amselle), all my lord's vassals followed the funeral, and there was not a dry eye among them, for she had done a deal of good among the poor. My lord the marquis, I never saw anybody so melancholy as he was afterwards, and sometimes he would be in such fits of violence, that we almost thought he had lost his senses. He did not stay long at the château, but joined his regiment; and soon after, all the servants, except my husband and I, received

otice to go, for my lord went to the wars. I never saw him fter; for he would not return to the château, though it is uch a fine place; and never finished those fine rooms he was uilding on the west side of it; and it has, in a manner, been ut up ever since, till my lord the count came here."

"The death of the marchioness appears extraordinary," said mily, who was anxious to know more than she dared to speak.

"Yes, madame," replied Dorothée, "it was extraordinary: have told you all I saw, and you may easily guess what I ink. I cannot say more, because I would not spread reports at might offend my lord the count."

"You are very right," said Emily;—"where did the marquis ie?"—"In the North of France, I believe, ma'amselle," plied Dorothée. ""I was very glad when I heard my lord the unt was coming, for this had been a sad desolate place these any years, and we heard such strange noises after my lady's eath, that, as I told you before, my husband and I left it for neighbouring cottage. And now, lady, I have told you all is sad history, and all my thoughts, and you have promised, ou know, never to give the least hint about it."—"I have," id Emily: "and I will be faithful to my promise, Dorothée; -what you have told me has interested me more than you an imagine. I only wish I could prevail upon you to tell me e name of the chevalier whom you thought so deserving of e marchioness."

Dorothée, however, steadily refused to do this, and then turned to the notice of Emily's likeness to the late marhioness. "There is another picture of her," added she, "hanging a room of the suite which was shut up. It was drawn, as have heard, before she was married, and is much more like ou than the miniature." When Emily expressed a strong esire to see this, Dorothée replied, that she did not wish to pen those rooms; but Emily reminded her, that the count ad talked the other day of ordering them to be opened, of hich Dorothée seemed to consider much; and then she owned at she should feel less, if she went into them with Emily

first, than otherwise; and at length promised to show the picture.

On the next night, about the same hour as before, Dorothée came to Emily's chamber with the keys of that suite of rooms which had been particularly appropriated to the late marchioness. These extended along the north side of the château, forming part of the old building; and as Emily's room was in the south, they had to pass over a great extent of the castle, and by the chambers of several of the family, whose observation Dorothée was anxious to avoid, since it might excite inquiry and raise reports, such as would displease the count. She therefore requested that Emily would wait half an hour before they ventured forth, that they might be certain all the servants were gone to bed. It was nearly one before the château was perfectly still, or Dorothée thought it prudent to leave the chamber. In this interval, her spirits seemed to be greatly affected by the remembrance of past events, and by the prospect of entering again upon places where these had occurred, and in which she had not been for so many years. Emily too was affected; but her feelings had more of solemnity, and less of fear. From the silence into which reflection and expectation had thrown them, they at length roused themselves, and left the chamber. Dorothée at first carried the lamp, but her hand trembled so much with infirmity and alarm, that Emily took it from her, and offered her arm to support her feeble steps.

They had to descend the great staircase, and, after passing over a wide extent of the château, to ascend another which led to the suite of rooms they were in quest of. They stepped cautiously along the open corridor that ran round the great hall, and into which the chambers of the count, countess, and the Lady Blanche opened; and from thence, descending the chief staircase, they crossed the hall itself. Proceeding through the servants' hall, where the dying embers of a wood fire still glimmered on the hearth, and the supper-table was surrounded by chairs that obstructed their passage, they came to the foot of the back staircase. Old Dorothée here paused and looked

round. "Let us listen," said she, "if anything is stirring; na'amselle, do you hear any voice?" "None," said Emily, there certainly is no person up in the château, besides our-elves."—"No, ma'amselle," said Dorothée, "but I have never been here at this hour before, and, after what I know, my ears are not wonderful." "What do you know?" said Emily. —"Oh, ma'amselle, we have no time for talking now; let us go on, That door on the left is the one we must open."

They proceeded; and having reached the top of the stair-case, Dorothée applied the key to the lock. "Ah," said she, as she endeavoured to turn it, "so many years have passed since this was opened, that I fear it will not move." Emily was more successful, and they presently entered a spacious and ancient chamber.

"Let us rest here awhile, madame," said Dorothée faintly, we are going into the chamber where my lady died! that door opens into it. Ah, ma'amselle! why did you persuade me to come?"

Emily drew one of the massy arm-chairs with which the apartment was furnished, and begged Dorothée would sit down, and try to compose her spirits.

Dorothée's spirits being now more composed, she rose, and unlocked the door that led into the late marchioness's apart-ment, and Emily passed into a lofty chamber hung round with dark arras, and so spacious, that the lamp she held up did not show its extent; while Dorothée, when she entered, had dropped into a chair, where sighing deeply, she scarcely trusted herself with the view of a scene so affecting to her. It was some time before Emily perceived through the dusk the bed on which the marchioness was said to have died: when, advancing to the upper end of the room, she discovered the high canopied tester of dark green damask, with the curtains descending to the floor in the fashion of a tent, half drawn, and remaining apparently as they had been left twenty years before; and over the whole bedding was thrown a counterpane, or pall, of black velvet, that hung down to the floor. Emily shuddered as she held the lamp over it, and looked within the

dark curtains, where she almost expected to have seen a human face; and, suddenly remembering the horror she had suffered upon discovering the dying Madame Montoni in the turret chamber of Udolpho, her spirits fainted; and she was turning from the bed, when Dorothée, who had now reached it, exclaimed, "Holy Virgin! methinks I see my lady stretched upon that pall—as when last I saw her!"

Emily, shocked by this exclamation, looked involuntarily again within the curtains, but the blackness of the pall only appeared; while Dorothée was compelled to support herself upon the side of the bed, and presently tears brought her some relief.

"Ah!" said she, after she had wept awhile, "it was here I sat on that terrible night, and held my lady's hand, and heard her last words, and saw all her sufferings—*here* she died in my arms!"

"Do not indulge these painful recollections," said Emily; "let us go. Show me the picture you mentioned, if it will not too much affect you."

"It hangs in the oriel," rising and going towards a small door near the bed's head, which she opened; and Emily followed with the light into the closet of the late marchioness.

"Alas! there she is, ma'amselle," said Dorothée, pointing to the portrait of a lady; "there is her very self! just as she looked when she came first to the château. You see, madame, she was all-blooming like you, then— and so soon to be cut off!"

While Dorothée spoke, Emily was attentively examining the picture, which bore a strong resemblance to the miniature, though the expression of the countenance in each was somewhat different, but still she thought she perceived something of that pensive melancholy in the portrait, which so strongly characterized the miniature.

In this closet were many memorials of the departed marchioness; a robe and several articles of her dress were scattered upon the chairs, as if they had just been thrown off. On the floor were a pair of black satin slippers; and on the dressing-table a pair of gloves, and a long black veil, which, as Emily

ook up to examine, she perceived was dropping to pieces with ge.

"Ah!" said Dorothée, observing the veil, "my lady's hand aid it there; it has never been moved since!"

Dorothée wept again, and then, taking up the veil, threw it uddenly over Emily, who shuddered to find it wrapped round er, descending even to her feet; and as she endeavoured to hrow it off, Dorothée entreated that she would keep it on for ne moment. "I thought," added she, "how like you would ook to my dear mistress in that veil;—may your life, ma'amelle, be a happier one than hers!"

Emily, having disengaged herself from the veil, laid it gain on the dressing-table, and surveyed the closet, where very object on which her eye fixed seemed to speak of the narchioness.

Having returned into the chamber, she desired to look nce more upon the bed; when, as they came opposite to the pen door leading to the saloon, Emily, in the partial gleam vhich the lamp threw into it, thought she saw something lide along into the obscurer part of the room. Her spirits had een much affected by the surrounding scene, or it is probable his circumstance, whether real of imaginary, would not have ffected her in the degree it did; but she endeavoured to onceal her emotion from Dorothée, who, however, observing er countenance change, inquired if she was ill.

"Let us go," said Emily faintly; "the air of these rooms is nwholesome": but when she attempted to do so, considering hat she must pass through the apartment where the phantom f her terror had appeared, this terror increased; and, too aint to support herself, she sat down on the side of the bed.

Dorothée, believing that she was only affected by a conideration of the melancholy catastrophe which had happened n this spot, endeavoured to cheer her; and then, as they sat ogether on the bed, she began to relate other particulars oncerning it, and this without reflecting that it might increase Emily's emotion but because they were particularly interesting o herself. "A little before my lady's death," said she, "when

the pains were gone off, she called me to her; and stretching out her hand to me, I sat down just there—where the curtain falls upon the bed. How well I remember her look at the time—death was in it!—I can almost fancy I see her now. There she lay, ma'amselle—her face was upon the pillow there! This black counterpane wat not upon the bed then; it was laid on after her death, and she was laid out upon it."

Emily turned to look within the dusky curtains, as if she could have seen the countenance of which Dorothée spoke. The edge of the white pillow only appeared above the blackness of the pall; but, as her eyes wandered over the pall itself, she fancied she saw it move. Without speaking, she caught Dorothée's arm, who, surprised by the action, and by the look of terror which accompanied it, turned her eyes from Emily to the bed, where, in the next moment, she too saw the pall slowly lifted and fall again.

Emily attempted to go, but Dorothée stood fixed, and gazed upon the bed; and at length said: "It is only the wind that waves it, ma'amselle! we have left all the doors open; see how the air waves the lamp too—it is only the wind."

She had scarcely uttered these words, when the pall was more violently agitated than before; but Emily, somewhat ashamed of her terrors, stepped back to the bed, willing to be convinced that the wind only had occasioned her alarm; when, as she gazed within the curtains, the pall moved again, and in the next moment the apparition of a human countenance rose above it.

Screaming with terror, they both fled, and got out of the chamber as fast as their trembling limbs would bear them, leaving open the doors of all the rooms through which they passed. When they reached the staircase, Dorothée threw open a chamber door, where some of the female servants slept, and sank breathless on the bed; while Emily, deprived of all presence of mind, made only a feeble attempt to conceal the occasion of her terror from the astonished servants: and though Dorothée, when she could speak, endeavoured to laugh at her own fright, and was joined by Emily, no remonstrances could

avail with the servants, who had quickly taken the alarm, to pass even the remainder of the night in a room near to these terrific chambers.

Dorothée having accompanied Emily to her own apartment, they then began to talk over, with some degree of coolness, the strange circumstance that had just occurred: and Emily would almost have doubted her own perceptions, had not those of Dorothée attested their truth. Having now mentioned what she had observed in the outer chamber, she asked the housekeeper whether she was certain no door had been left unfastened, by which a person might secretly have entered the apartments. Dorothée replied that she had constantly kept the keys of the several doors in her own possession; and when she had gone her rounds through the castle, as she frequently did, to examine if all was safe, she had tried these doors among the rest, and had always found them fastened. It was therefore impossible, she added, that any person could have got admittance into the apartments; and if they could— it was very improbable they should have chosen to sleep in a place so cold and forlorn.

Emily was very solemnly affected. Of whatever nature might be the appearance she had witnessed, whether human or supernatural, the fate of the deceased marchioness was a truth not to be doubted; and this unaccountable circumstance, occurring in the very scene of her sufferings, affected Emily's imagination with a superstitious awe, to which, after having detected the fallacies at Udolpho, she might not have yielded, had she been ignorant of the unhappy story related by the housekeeper. Her she now solemnly conjured to conceal the occurrence of this night, and to make light of the terror she had already betrayed, that the count might not be distressed by reports, which would certainly spread alarm and confusion among his family. "Time, she added, "may explain this mysterious affair; meanwhile, let us watch the event with silence."

Dorothée readily acquiesced: but she now recollected that she had left all the doors of the north suite of rooms open;

and, not having courage to return alone to lock even the outer one. Emily, after some effort, so far conquered her own fears, that she offered to accompany her to the foot of the back staircase, and to wait there while Dorothée ascended; whose resolution being reassured by this circumstance, she consented to go; and they left Emily's apartment together.

No sound disturbed the stillness as they passed along the halls and galleries; but on reaching the foot of the back staircase, Dorothée's resolution failed again. Having, however, paused a moment to listen, and no sound being heard above, she ascended, leaving Emily below; scarcely suffering her eye to glance within the first chamber, she fastened the door which shut up the whole suite of apartments, and returned to Emily.

As they stepped along the passage leading into the great hall, a sound of lamentation was heard, which seemed to come from the hall itself, and they stopped in new alarm to listen; when Emily presently distinguished the voice of Annette, whom she found crossing the hall, with another female servant, and so terrified by the report which the other maids had spread, that, believing she could be safe only where her lady was, she was going for refuge to her apartment. Emily's endeavours to laugh, or to argue her out of these terrors, were equally vain; and, in compassion for her distress, she consented that she should remain in her room during the night.

CHAPTER XXII

Emily's injunctions to Annette to be silent on the subject of her terror were ineffectual; and the occurrence of the preceding night spread such alarm among the servants, who now all affirmed that they had frequently heard unaccountable noises in the château, that a report soon reached the count of the north side of the castle being haunted. He treated this, at first, with ridicule; but perceiving that it was productive of serious evil, in the confusion it occasioned among his household, he forbade any person to repeat it, on pain of punishment.

The arrival of a party of his friends soon withdrew his

houghts entirely from this subjects; and his servants had now ittle leisure to brood over it, except indeed in the evenings fter supper, when they all assembled in their hall, and related tories of ghosts till they feared to look round the room; started f the echo of a closing door murmured along the passage, and efused to go singly to any part of the castle.

Among the visitors at the château was the Baron de Saint Foix, an old friend of the count, and his son, the Chevalier Saint Foix, a sensible and amiable young man; who, having n the preceding year seen the Lady Blanche at Paris, had become her declared admirer. The friendship which the count had long entertained for his father, and the equality of their circumstances, made him secretly approve of the connexion; but thinking his daughter at this time too young to fix her choice for life, and wishing to prove the sincerity and strength of the chevalier's attachment, he then rejected his suit, though without forbidding his future hope. This young man now came, with the baron his father, to claim the reward of a steady affection, a claim which the count admitted, and which Blanche did not reject.

While these visitors were at the château, it became a scene of gaiety and splendour. The pavilion in the woods was fitted up, and frequented in the fine evenings as a supper-room, when the hour usually concluded with a concert, at which the count and countess, who were scientific performers, and the Chevaliers Henri and Saint Foix, with the Lady Blanche and Emily, whose voices and fine taste compensated for the want of more skillful execution, usually assisted. Several of the count's servants performed on horns and other instruments, some of which, placed at a little distance among the woods, spoke in sweet response to the harmony that proceeded from the pavilion.

At any other period these parties would have been delightful to Emily; but her spirits were now oppressed with a melancholy which she perceived that no kind of what is called amusement had power to dissipate, and which the tender and

frequently pathetic melody of these concerts sometimes increased to a very painful degree.

She was particularly fond of walking the woods that hung on a promontory overlooking the sea. Their luxuriant shade was soothing to her pensive mind; and in the partial views which they afforded of the Mediterranean, with its winding shores and passing sails, tranquil beauty was united with grandeur. The paths were rude, and frequently overgrown with vegetation; but their tasteful owner would suffer little to be done to them, and scarcely a single branch to be lopped from the venerable trees. On an eminence, in one of the most sequestered parts of these woods, was a rustic seat formed of the trunk of a decayed oak, which had once been a noble tree, and of which many lofty branches still flourishing united with beech and pines to overcanopy the spot. Beneath their deep umbrage, the eye passed over the tops of other woods to the Mediterranean; and to the left, through an opening, was seen a ruined watch-tower, standing on a point of rock near the sea, and rising from among the tufted foliage.

One evening she lingered here to a late hour. She had sat on the steps of the building, watching in tranquil melancholy the gradual effect of evening over the extensive prospect, till the grey waters of the Mediterranean and the massy woods were almost the only features of the scene that remained visible.

The moon was now rising out of the sea. She watched its gradual progress, the extending line of radiance it threw upon the waters, the sparkling oars, the sail faintly silvered, and the wood-tops and the battlements of the watch-tower, at whose foot she was sitting, just tinted with the rays. Emily's spirits were in harmony with this scene. As she sat meditating, sounds stole by her on the air, which she immediately knew to be the music and the voice she had formerly heard at midnight; and the emotion of awe which she felt was not unmixed with terror, when she considered her remote and lonely situation. The sounds drew nearer. She would have risen to leave the place; but they seemed to come from the way she must

have taken towards the château, and she awaited the event in trembling expectation. The sounds continued to approach for some time, and then ceased. Emily sat listening, gazing, and unable to move, when she saw a figure emerge from the shade of the woods, and pass along the bank, at some little distance before her. It went swiftly; and her spirits were so overcome with awe, that, though she saw, she did not much observe it.

The little occurrence deeply impressed her mind; and when she withdrew to her own room, it recalled so forcibly the circumstances she had witnessed a few nights before, that she had scarcely courage to remain alone. She watched to a late hour; when, no sound having renewed her fears, she at length sank to repose. But this was of short continuance, for she was disturbed by a loud and unusual noise that seemed to come from the gallery into which her chamber opened. Groans were distinctly heard, and immediately after a dead weight fell against the door, with a violence that threatened to burst it open. She called loudly to know who was there, but received no answer, though at intervals she still thought she heard something like a low moaning. Fear deprived her of the power to move. Soon after she heard footsteps in a remote part of the gallery; and as they approached, she called more loudly than before, till the steps paused at her door. She then distinguished the voices of several of the servants, who seemed too much engaged by some circumstance without, to attend to her calls; but Annette soon after entering the room for water, Emily understood that one of the maids had fainted, whom she immediately desired them to bring into her room, where she assisted to restore her. When this girl had recovered her speech, she affirmed, that as she was passing up the back staircase, in the way to her chamber, she had seen an apparition on the second landing-place; she held the lamp low, she said, that she might pick her way, several of the stairs being infirm and even decayed, and it was upon raising her eyes that she saw this appearance. It stood for a moment in the corner of the landing-place which she was approaching, and then, gliding

up the stairs, vanished at the door of the apartment that had been lately opened. She heard afterwards a hollow sound.

"Then the devil has got the key to that apartment," said Dorothée, "for it could be nobody but he: I locked the door myself !"

The girl, springing down the stairs and passing up the great staircase, had run, with a faint scream, till she reached the gallery, where she fell, groaning, at Emily's door.

From this night the terror of the servants increased to such an excess, that several of them determined to leave the château, and requested their discharge of the count, who, if he had any faith in the subjects of their alarm, thought proper to dissemble it, and, anxious to avoid the inconvenience that threatened him, employed ridicule, and then argument, to convince them they had nothing to apprehend from supernatural agency. But fear had rendered their minds inaccessible to reason; and it was now that Ludovico proved at once his courage and his gratitude for the kindness he had received from the count, by offering to watch, during a night, in the suite of rooms reputed to be haunted. "He feared," he said, "no spirits; and if anything of human form appeared—he would prove that he dreaded that as little."

The count paused upon the offer; while the servants, who heard it, looked upon one another in doubt and amazement; and Annette, terrified for the safety of Ludovico, employed tears and entreaties to dissuade him from his purpose.

"You are a bold fellow," said the count, smiling; "think well of what you are going to encounter before you finally determine upon it. However, if you persevere in your resolution, I will accept your offer, and your intrepidity shall not go unrewarded."

The count gave orders for the north apartments to be opened and prepared for the reception of Ludovico; but Dorothée, remembering what she had lately witnessed there, feared to obey; and not one of the other servants daring to venture thither, the rooms remained shut up till the time when Ludovico

was to retire thither for the night, an hour for which the whole household waited with impatience.

After supper, Ludovico, by the order of the count, attended him in his closet, where they remained for near half an hour; and on leaving which, his lord delivered to him a sword.

They now returned to the supper-room, where the count's guests awaited to accompany him and Ludovico to the door of the north apartments; and Dorothée, being summoned for the keys, delivered them to Ludovico, who then led the way, followed by most of the inhabitants of the château. Having reached the back staircase, several of the servants shrank back, and refused to go farther; but the rest followed him to the top of the staircase, where a broad landing-place allowed them to flock round him, while he applied the key to the door, during which they watched him with as much eager curiosity as if he had been performing some magical rite.

Ludovico, unaccustomed to the lock, could not turn it; and Dorothée, who had lingered far behind, was called forward, under whose hand the door opened slowly; and, her eye glancing within the dusky chamber, she uttered a sudden shriek, and retreated. At this signal of alarm the greater part of the crowd hurried down the stairs; and the count, Henri, and Ludovico were left alone to pursue the inquiry, who instantly rushed into the apartment—Ludovico with a drawn sword, which he had just time to draw from the scabbard; the count with the lamp in his hand; and Henri carrying a basket containing provisions for the courageous adventurer.

Having looked hastily round the first room, where nothing appeared to justify alarm, they passed on to the second; and here too all being quiet, they proceeded to a third with a more tempered step. The count had now leisure to smile at the discomposure into which he had been surprised, and to ask Ludovico in which room he designed to pass the night.

"There are several chambers beyond these, your *Excellenza*," said Ludovico, pointing to a door, "and in one of them is a bed, they say. I will pass the night there; and when I am weary of watching, I can lie down."

"Oh, here is the saloon," said the count, as they entered the spacious apartment in which Emily and Dorothée had rested.

Ludovico now opened the door of the bedroom, and the count, as he entered, was struck with the funereal appearance which the dark arras gave to it. He approached the bed with an emotion of solemnity, and, perceiving it to be covered with the pall of black velvet, paused: "What can this mean ?" said he as he gazed upon it.

"I have heard, my lord," said Ludovico, as he stood at the feet looking within the canopied curtains, "that the Lady Marchioness de Villeroi died in this chamber, and remained here till she was removed to be buried; and this perhaps, signor, may account for the pall."

The count made no reply, but stood for a few moments engaged in thought, and evidently much affected. Then turning to Ludovico, he asked him with a serious air whether he thought his courage would support him through the night. "If you doubt this," added the count, "do not be ashamed to own it; I will release you from your engagement, without exposing you to the triumphs of your fellow-servants."

Ludovico paused; pride, and something very like fear, seemed struggling in his breast: pride, however, was victorious;—he blushed, and his hesitation ceased.

"No, my lord," said he, " I will go through with what I have begun, and I am grateful for your consideration. On that hearth I will make a fire, and, with the good cheer in this basket I doubt not I shall do well."

"Be it so," said the count; "but how will you beguile the tediousness of the night, if you do not sleep ?"

"When I am weary, my lord," replied Ludovico, "I shall not fear to sleep; in the meanwhile I have a book that will entertain me."

"Well," said the count, "I hope nothing will disturb you; but if you should be seriously alarmed in the night, come to my apartment. I have too much confidence in your good sense and courage to believe you will be alarmed on slight grounds, or suffer the gloom of this chamber, or its remote

situation, to overcome you with ideal terrors. To-morrow I shall have to thank you for an important service; these rooms shall then be thrown open, and my people will be convinced of their error. Good night, Ludovico; let me see you early in the morning, and remember what I lately said to you."

"I will, my lord; good night to your *Excellenza*,—let me attend you with the light."

He lighted the count and Henri through the chambers to the outer door. On the landing-place stood a lamp, which one of the affrighted servants had left; and Henri, as he took it up, again bade Ludovico good night, who having respectfully returned the wish, closed the door upon them, and fastened it. Then, as he retired to the bedchamber, he examined the rooms through which he passed, with more minuteness than he had done before, for he apprehended that some person might have concealed himself in them, for the purpose of frightening him. No one, however, but himself was in these chambers; and, leaving open the doors through which he passed, he came again to the great drawing-room, whose spaciousness and silent gloom somewhat awed him. For a moment he stood, looking back through the long suite of rooms he had quitted; and as he turned, perceiving a light and his own figure reflected in one of the large mirrors, he started. Other objects too were seen obscurely on its dark surface; but he paused not to examine them, and returned hastily into the bedroom, as he surveyed which, he observed the door of the oriel, and opened it. All within was still. On looking round, his eye was arrested by the portrait of the deceased marchioness, upon which he gazed for a considerable time with great attention and some surprise; and then, having examined the closet, he returned into the bedroom, where he kindled a wood fire, the bright blaze of which revived his spirits, which had begun to yield to the gloom and silence of the place, for gusts of wind alone broke at intervals this silence. He now drew a small table and a chair near the fire, took a bottle of wine and some cold provision out of his basket, and regaled himself. When he had finished his repast, he laid his sword upon the table, and, not

feeling disposed to sleep, drew from his pocket the book he had spoken of.—It was a volume of old Provençal tales.—Having stirred the fire into a brighter blaze, trimmed his lamp, and drawn his chair upon the hearth, he began to read, and his attention was soon wholly occupied by the scenes which the page disclosed.

THE PROVENÇAL TALE

There lived in the province of Bretagne a noble baron, famous for his magnificence and courtly hospitalities. His castle was graced with ladies of exquisite beauty, and thronged with illustrious knights; for the honour he paid to feats of chivalry invited the brave of distant countries to enter his lists, and his court was more splendid than those of many princes. Eight minstrels were retained in his service, who used to sing to their harps romantic fictions taken from the Arabians, or adventures of chivalry that befell knights during the Crusades, or the martial deeds of the baron, their lord;—while he, surrounded by his knights and ladies, banqueted in the great hall of his castle, where the costly tapestry that adorned the walls with pictured exploits of his ancestors, the casements of painted glass enriched with armorial bearings, the gorgeous banners that waved along the roof, the sumptuous canopies, the profusion of gold and silver that glittered on the sideboards, the numerous dishes that covered the tables, the number and gay liveries of the attendants, with the chivalric and splendid attire of the guests, united to form a scene of magnificence, such as we may not hope to see in these *degenerate days.*

Of the baron the following adventure is related. One night, having retired late from the banquet to his chamber, and dismissed his attendants, he was surprised by the appearance of a stranger of a noble air, but of a sorrowful and dejected countenance. Believing that this person had been secreted in the apartment, since it appeared impossible he could have lately passed the ante-room unobserved by the pages in

vaiting, who would have prevented this intrusion on their ord, the baron, calling loudly for his people, drew his sword, vhich he had not yet taken from his side, and stood upon his efence. The stranger, slowly advancing, told him that there vas nothing to fear; that he came with no hostile design, but o communicate to him a terrible secret, which it was necessary or him to know.

The baron, appeased by the courteous manners of the tranger, after surveying him for some time in silence, returned is sword into the scabbard, and desired him to explain the neans by which he had obtained access to the chamber, and he purpose of this extraordinary visit.

Without answering either of these inquiries, the stranger aid that he could not then explain himself, but that if the aron would follow him to the edge of the forest, at a short listance from the castle walls, he would there convince him hat he had something of importance to disclose.

This proposal again alarmed the baron, who would scarcely elieve that the stranger meant to draw him to so solitary a pot at this hour of the night, without harbouring a design gainst his life; and he refused to go, observing, at the same ime, that if the stranger's purpose was an honourable one, e would not persist in refusing to reveal the occasion of his isit in the apartment where they were.

While he spoke this, he viewed the stranger still more ttentively than before, but observed no change in his counten- nce, nor any symptom that might intimate a consciousness of vil design. He was habited like a knight, was of a tall and najestic stature, and of dignified and courteous manners. Still, however, he refused to communicate the subject of his rrand in any place but that he had mentioned; and at the ame time gave hints concerning the secret he would disclose, hat awakened a degree of solemn curiosity in the baron, which t length induced him to consent to the stranger on certain onditions.

"Sir knight," said he, "I will attend you to the forest, and

will take with me only four of my people, who shall witness our conference."

To this, however, the knight objected.

"What I would disclose," said he with solemnity, "is to you alone. There are only three living persons to whom the circumstance is known: it is of more consequence to you and your house than I shall now explain. In future years you will look back to this night with satisfaction or repentance, accordingly as you now determine. As you would hereafter prosper—follow me; I pledge you the honour of a knight, that no evil shall befall you. If you are contented to dare futurity—remain in your chamber, and I will depart as I came."

"Sir knight," replied the baron, "how is it possible that my future peace can depend upon my present determination?"

"That is not now to be told," said the stranger; "I have explained myself to the utmost. It is late; if you follow me, it must be quickly;—you will do well to consider the alternative."

The baron mused; and as he looked upon the knight, he perceived his countenance assume a singular solemnity.

[Here Ludovico thought he heard a noise, and he threw a glance round the chamber, and then held up the lamp to assist his observation; but not perceiving anything to confirm his alarm, he took up the book again, and pursued the story.]

The baron paced his apartment for some time in silence, impressed by the words of the stranger, whose extraordinary request he feared to grant, and feared also to refuse. At length he said, "Sir knight, you are utterly unknown to me; tell me yourself,—is it reasonable that I should trust myself alone with a stranger, at this hour, in a solitary forest? Tell me, at least, who you are, and who assisted to secrete you in this chamber."

The knight frowned at these latter words, and was a moment silent; then, with a countenance somewhat stern, he said:

"I am an English knight; I am called Sir Bevys of Lancaster —and my deeds are not unknown at the Holy City, whence I was returning to my native land, when I was benighted in the neighbouring forest."

"Your name is not unknown to fame," said the baron; I have heard of it." (The knight looked haughtily). "But vhy, since my castle is known to entertain all true knights, lid not your herald announce you ? Why did you not appear t the banquet, where your presence would have been wel- omed, instead of hiding yourself in my castle, and stealing to ny chamber at midnight ?"

The stranger frowned, and turned away in silence; but the aron repeated the questions.

"I come not," said the knight, "to answer inquiries, but to eveal facts. If you would know more, follow me, and again pledge the honour of a knight that you shall return in safety. Be quick in your determination—I must be gone."

After some further hesitation, the baron determined to ollow the stranger, and to see the result of his extraordinary equest: he therefore again drew forth his sword, and, taking p a lamp, bade the knight lead on. The latter obeyed; and pening the door of the chamber, they passed into the ante- oom, where the baron, surprised to find all his pages asleep, topped, and with hasty violence was going to reprimand them or their carelessness, when the knight waved his hand, and ooked so expressively upon the baron, that the latter restrained is resentment, and passed on.

The knight, having descended a staircase, opened a secret loor which the baron had believed was known only to himself, nd, proceeding through several narrow and winding passages, ame at length to a small gate that opened beyond the walls f the castle. Meanwhile the baron followed in silence and mazement, on perceiving that these secret passages were so vell known to a stranger, and felt inclined to return from an dventure that appeared to partake of treachery as well as anger. Then, considering that he was armed, and observing he courteous and noble air of his conductor, his courage eturned, he blushed that it had failed him for a moment, and e resolved to trace the mystery to its source.

He now found himself on the heathy platform before the reat gates of his castle, where, on looking up, he perceived

lights glimmering in the different casements of the guests, who were retiring to sleep; and while he shivered in the blast, and looked on the dark and desolate scene around him, he thought of the comforts of his warm chamber rendered cheerful by the blaze of wood, and felt, for a moment, the full contrast of his present situation.

The wind was strong, and the baron watched his lamp with anxiety, expecting every moment to see it extinguished; but though the flame wavered, it did not expire, and he still followed the stranger, who often sighed as he went, but did not speak.

When they reached the borders of the forest, the knight turned and raised his head, as if he meant to address the baron; but then closing his lips in silence, he walked on.

As they entered beneath the dark and spreading boughs, the baron, affected by the solemnity of the scene, hesitated whether to proceed, and demanded how much farther they were to go. The knight replied only by a gesture; and the baron, with hesitating steps and a suspicious eye, followed through an obscure and intricate path, till, having proceeded a considerable way, he again demanded whither they were going, and refused to proceed unless he was informed.

As he said this, he looked at his own sword and at the knight alternately, who shook his head, and whose dejected countenance disarmed the baron, for a moment, of suspicion.

" A little farther is the place whither I would lead you," said the stranger: "no evil shall befall you—I have sworn it on the honour of a knight."

The baron, reassured, again followed in silence, and they soon arrived at a deep recess of the forest, where the dark and lofty chestnuts entirely excluded the sky, and which was so overgrown with underwood that they proceeded with difficulty. The knight sighed deeply as he passed, and sometimes paused; and having at length reached a spot where the trees crowded into a knot, he turned, and with a terrific look, pointing to the ground, the baron saw there the body of a man stretched at its length and weltering in blood; a ghastly wound was on

he forehead, and death appeared already to have contracted he features.

The baron, on perceiving the spectacle, started in horror, ooked at the knight for explanation, and was then going to aise the body, and examine if there were yet any remains of ife; but the stranger, waving his hand, fixed upon him a look o earnest and mournful, as not only much surprised him, but nade him desist.

But what were the baron's emotions, when, on holding the amp near the features of the corpse, he discovered the exact esemblance of the stranger his conductor, to whom he now ooked up in astonishment and inquiry ! As he gazed, he per-eived the countenance of the knight change and begin to ade, till his whole form gradually vanished from his astonished ense ! While the baron stood, fixed to the spot, a voice was eard to utter these words:

[Ludovico started, and laid down the book, for he thought e heard a voice in the chamber, and he looked toward the bed, vhere, however, he saw only the dark curtains and the pall. He listened, scarcely daring to draw his breath, but heard only he distant roaring of the sea in the storm, and the blast that ushed by the casements; when, concluding that he had been leceived by its sighings, he took up his book to finish the tory.]

"The body of Sir Bevys of Lancaster, a noble knight of England, lies before you. He was this night waylaid and nurdered, as he journeyed from the Holy City towards his ative land. Respect the honour of knighthood and the law of humanity; inter the body in Christian ground, and cause his murderers to be punished. As ye observe or neglect this, hall peace and happiness, or war and misery, light upon you nd your house for ever !"

The baron, when he recovered from the awe and astonish-nent into which this adventure had thrown him, returned to is castle, whither he caused the body of Sir Bevys to be emoved; and on the following day it was interred, with the onours of knighthood, in the chapel of the castle, attended

by all the noble knights and ladies who graced the court of Baron de Brunne.

Ludovico, having finished this story, laid aside the book, for he felt drowsy; and after putting more wood on the fire, and taking another glass of wine, he reposed himself in the armchair on the hearth. In his dream he still beheld the chamber where he really was, and once or twice started from imperfect slumbers, imagining he saw a man's face looking over the high back of his arm-chair. This idea had so strongly impressed him, that when he raised his eyes he almost expected to meet other eyes fixed upon his own; and he quitted his seat, and looked behind the chair, before he felt perfectly convinced that no person was there.

Thus closed the hour.

CHAPTER XXIII

The count, who had slept little during the night, rose early, and anxious to speak with Ludovico, went to the north apartment; but the outer door having been fastened on the preceding night, he was obliged to knock loudly for admittance. Neither the knocking nor his voice was heard; but considering the distance of this door from the bedroom, and that Ludovico, wearied with watching, had probably fallen into a deep sleep, the count was not surprised on receiving no answer; and leaving the door, he went down to walk in his grounds.

Emily also rose at an early hour, and took her customary walk along the brow of the promontory that overhung the Mediterranean. Her mind was not now occupied with the occurrences of the château, and Valancourt was the subject of her mournful thoughts; whom she had not yet taught herself to consider with indifference.

On turning into a thicker part of the woods, she perceived a person walking slowly in the gloom at some little distance; and, her mind engaged by the idea of him, she started and paused, imagining this to be Valancourt. The person advanced with quicker steps; and before she could recover

ecollection enough to avoid him, he spoke, and she then knew he voice of the count, who expressed some surprise on finding ier walking at so early an hour, and made a feeble effort to ally her on her love of solitude. Expressing surprise at not aving yet heard from his friend, the advocate at Avignon, n answer to the questions proposed to him respecting the states of the late Madame Montoni, he with friendly zeal ndeavoured to cheer Emily with hopes of establishing her laim to them.

When they returned to the château, Emily retired to her apartment, and Count de Villefort to the door of the north chambers. This was still fastened; but being now determined o arouse Ludovico, he renewed his calls more loudly than before; after which a total silence ensued; and the count, finding all his efforts to be heard ineffectual, at length began o fear that some accident had befallen Ludovico, whom error of an imaginary being might have deprived of his enses. He therefore left the door with an intention of summoning his servants to force it open, some of whom he now heard moving in the lower part of the château.

To the court's inquiries, whether they had seen or heard Ludovico, they replied, in affright, that not one of them had ventured on the north side of the château since the preceding night.

"He sleeps soundly then," said the count, "and is at such a distance from the outer door, which is fastened, that to gain admittance to the chambers it will be necessary to force it. Bring an instrument and follow me."

The servant stood mute and dejected; and it was not till nearly all the household were assembled, that the count's orders were obeyed. In the meantime, Dorothée was telling of a door that opened from a gallery leading from the great staircase into the last ante-room of the saloon; and this being much nearer to the bedchamber, it appeared probable that Ludovico might be easily awakened by an attempt to open it. Thither, therefore, the count went: but his voice was as ineffectual at this door as it had proved at the remoter one:

and now, seriously interested for Ludovico, he was himself going to strike upon the door with the instrument, when he observed its singular beauty, and withheld the blow. It appeared on the first glance to be of ebony, so dark and close was its grain, and so high its polish; but it proved to be only of larch-wood, of the growth of Provence, then famous for its forests of larch. The beauty of its polished hue, and of its delicate carvings, determined the count to spare this door, and he returned to that leading from the back staircase; which, being at length forced, he entered the first ante-room, followed by Henri and a few of the most courageous of his servants, the rest awaiting the event of the inquiry on the stairs and landing-place.

All was silent in the chambers through which the count passed; and, having reached the saloon, he called loudly upon Ludovico; after which, still receiving no answer, he threw open the door of the bedroom and entered.

The profound stillness within confirmed his apprehensions for Ludovico, for not even the breathings of a person in sleep were heard; and his uncertainty was soon terminated, since, the shutters being all closed, the chamber was too dark for any object to be distinguished in it.

The count bade a servant open them, who, as he crossed the room to do so, stumbled over something and fell to the floor; when his cry occasioned such panic among the few of his fellows who had ventured thus far, that they instantly fled, and the count and Henri were left to finish the adventure.

Henri then sprang across the room, and opening a window-shutter, they perceived that the man had fallen over a chair near the hearth in which Ludovico had been sitting;—for he sat there no longer, nor could he anywhere be seen by the imperfect light that was admitted into the apartment. The count, seriously alarmed, now opened other shutters, that he might be enabled to examine further; and Ludovico not yet appearing, he stood for a moment suspended in astonishment, and scarcely trusting his senses, till his eyes glancing on the bed, he advanced to examine whether he was there asleep. No

person, however, was in it; and he proceeded to the oriel, where everything remained as on the preceding night, but Ludovico was nowhere to be found.

The count now checked his amazement, considering that Ludovico might have left the chambers during the night, overcome by the terrors which their lonely desolation and the recollected reports concerning them had inspired. Yet, if this had been the fact, the man would naturally have sought society, and his fellow-servants had all declared they had not seen him; the door of the outer room also had been found fastened with the key on the inside. It was impossible, therefore, for him to have passed through that; and all the outer doors of this suite were found, on examination, to be bolted and locked, with the keys also within them. The count, being then compelled to believe that the lad had escaped through the casements, next examined them; but such as opened wide enough to admit the body of a man were found to be carefully secured either by iron bars or by shutters, and no vestige appeared of any person having attempted to pass them; neither was it probable that Ludovico would have incurred the risk of breaking his neck by leaping from a window, when he might have walked safely through a door.

The count's amazement did not admit of words; but he returned once more to examine the bedroom, where was no appearance of disorder, except that occasioned by the late overthrow of the chair, near which had stood a small table; and on this Ludovico's sword, his lamp, the book he had been reading, and the remnant of his flask of wine, still remained. At the foot of the table, too, was the basket with some fragments of provision and wood.

The count himself assisted in lifting the arras with which the bedchamber, saloon, and one of the ante-rooms were hung, that he might discover if any door had been concealed behind it; but, after a laborious search, none was found: and he at length quitted the apartments, having secured the door of the last ante-chamber, the key of which he took into his own possession. He then gave orders that strict search should be

made for Ludovico, not only in the château, but in the neighbourhood; and retiring with Henri to his closet, they remained there in conversation for a considerable time; and, whatever was the subject of it, Henri from this hour lost much of his vivacity, and his manners were particularly grave and reserved whenever the topic which now agitated the count's family with wonder and alarm was introduced.

The most strenuous search after Ludovico proved unsuccessful; and after several days of indefatigable inquiry, poor Annette gave herself up to despair, and the other inhabitants of the château to amazement.

Emily, whose mind had been deeply affected by the disastrous fate of the late marchioness, and with the mysterious connexion which she fancied had existed between her and St. Aubert, was particularly impressed by the late extraordinary event, and much concerned for the loss of Ludovico, whose integrity and faithful services claimed both her esteem and gratitude. She was now very desirous to return to the quiet retirement of her convent; but every hint of this was received with real sorrow by Lady Blanche, and affectionately set aside by the count, for whom she felt much of the respectful love and admiration of a daughter, and to whom, by Dorothée's consent, she at length mentioned the appearance which they had witnessed in the chamber of the deceased marchioness. At any other period he would have smiled at such a relation, and have believed that its object had existed only in the distempered fancy of the relater; but he now attended to Emily with seriousness; and, when she concluded, requested of her a promise that this occurrence should rest in silence.

On the week following the disappearance of Ludovico, all the count's guests took leave of him, except the baron, his son, M. Saint Foix, and Emily; the latter of whom was soon after embarrassed and distressed by the arrival of another visitor, M. Du Pont, which made her determine upon withdrawing to her convent immediately. The delight that appeared in his countenance when he met her, told that he brought back the same ardour of passion which had formerly

banished him from Château-le-Blanc. He was received with reserve by Emily, and with pleasure by the count, who presented him to her with a smile that seemed intended to plead his cause, and who did not hope the less for his friend, from the embarrassment she betrayed.

But M. Du Pont, with truer sympathy, seemed to understand her manner, and his countenance quickly lost its vivacity, and sank into the languor of despondency.

On the following day, however, he sought an opportunity of declaring the purport of his visit, and renewed his suit; a declaration which was received with real concern by Emily, who immediately sought the count, and communicated to him her intention of returning to the convent.

Emily, when she left the count, went to mention her intended departure to the countess, who opposed it with polite expressions of regret; after which, she sent a note to acquaint the lady abbess that she should return to the convent; and thither she withdrew on the evening of the following day.

She was pleased to find herself once more in the tranquil retirement of the convent, where she experienced a renewal of all the maternal kindness of the abbess, and of the sisterly attentions of the nuns. A report of the late extraordinary occurrence at the château had already reached them; and after supper, on the evening of her arrival, it was the subject of conversation in the convent parlour, where she was requested to mention some particulars of that unaccountable event. Emily was guarded in her conversation on this subject, and briefly related a few circumstances concerning Ludovico, whose disappearance, her auditors almost unanimously agreed, had been effected by supernatural means.

" A belief had so long prevailed," said a nun, who was called Sister Frances, "that the château was haunted, that I was surprised when I heard the count had the temerity to inhabit it. Its former possessor, I fear, had some deed of conscience to atone for: let us hope that the virtues of its present owner would preserve him from the punishment due to the errors of the last, if, indeed, he was a criminal."

"Of what crime then was he suspected ?" said a Mademoiselle Feydeau, a boarder at the convent.

"Let us pray for his soul !" said a nun, who had till now sat in silent attention. "If he was a criminal, his punishment in this world was sufficient."

There was a mixture of wildness and solemnity in her manner of delivering this, which struck Emily exceedingly; but Mademoiselle repeated her question, without noticing the solemn eagerness of the nun.

"I dare not presume to say what was his crime," replied Sister Frances; "but I have heard many reports of an extraordinary nature respecting the late Marquis de Villeroi, and among others, that soon after the death of his lady he quitted Château-le-Blanc, and never afterwards returned to it. I was not here at the time, so I can only mention it from report; and so many years have passed since the marchioness died, that few of our sisterhood, I believe, can do more."

"But I can," said the nun, who had before spoken, and whom they called Sister Agnes.

"You, then," said Mademoiselle Feydeau, "are possibly acquainted with circumstances that enable you to judge whether he was a criminal or not, and what was the crime imputed to him."

"I am," replied the nun; "but who shall dare to scrutinize my thoughts—who shall dare to pluck out my opinion ? God only is his judge, and to that judge he is gone."

Emily looked with surprise at Sister Frances, who returned her a significant glance.

"I only requested your opinion," said Mademoiselle Feydeau mildly: "if the subject is displeasing to you, I will drop it."

"Displeasing !" said the nun with emphasis:—"we are idle talkers; we do not weigh the meaning of the words we use; *displeasing* is a poor word. I will go pray." As she said this, she rose from her seat, and with a profound sigh quitted the room.

"What can be the meaning of this ?" said Emily, when she was gone.

"It is nothing extraordinary," replied Sister Frances, "she is ften thus: but she has no meaning in what she says. Her ntellects are at times deranged. Did you never see her thus efore ?"

"Never," said Emily. "I have, indeed, sometimes thought hat there was the melancholy of madness in her look, but ever before perceived it in her speech. Poor soul, I will pray or her !"

"Your prayers then, my daughter, will unite with ours," bserved the lady abbess; "she has need of them."

Count de Villefort at length received a letter from the dvocate at Avignon, encouraging Emily to assert her claim o the estates of the late Madame Montoni; and about the ame time a messenger arrived from the late M. Quesnel, with ntelligence that made an appeal to the law on this subject nnecessary, since it appeared that the only person who could ave opposed her claim was now no more. A friend of M. Quesnel, who resided at Venice, had sent him an account of he death of Montoni, who had been brought to trial with Orsino, as his supposed accomplice in the murder of the Venetian nobleman. Orsino was found guilty, condemned, and xecuted upon the wheel; but nothing being discovered to riminate Montoni and his colleagues on this charge, they were ll released except Montoni, who, being considered by the enate as a very dangerous person, was, for other reasons, rdered again into confinement, where it was said he had died n a doubtful and mysterious manner, and not without suspiion of having been poisoned. The authority from which M. Quesnel had received this information would not allow im to doubt its truth; and he told Emily, that she had now nly to lay claim to the estates of her late aunt to secure them; nd added, that he would himself assist in the necessary forms f this business. The term for which La Vallée had been let eing now also nearly expired, he acquainted her with the ircumstance, and advised her to take the road thither through Toulouse, where he promised to meet her, and where it would e proper for her to take possession of the estates of the late

Madame Montoni; adding that he would spare her any difficulties that might occur on that occasion from the want of knowledge on the subject, and that he believed it would be necessary for her to be at Toulouse in about three weeks from the present time.

An increase of fortune seemed to have awakened this sudden kindness in M. Quesnel towards his niece; and it appeared that he entertained more respect for the rich heiress, than he had ever felt compassion for the poor and unfriended orphan.

When Count de Villefort, with Blanche, came to the convent to give Emily the advice of the advocate, he was informed of the contents of M. Quesnel's letter, and gave his sincere congratulations on the occasion; but she observed, that when the first expression of satisfaction had faded from his countenance, an unusual gravity succeeded, and she scarcely hesitated to inquire its cause.

"It has no new occasion," replied the count; "I am harassed and perplexed by the confusion into which my family is thrown by their foolish superstition. Idle reports are floating round me, which I can neither admit to be true nor prove to be false; and I am also very anxious about the poor fellow Ludovico, concerning whom I have not been able to obtain information. Every part of the château, and every part of the neighbourhood too, has, I believe, been searched, and I know not what further can be done, since I have already offered large rewards for the recovery of him. The keys of the north apartment I have not suffered to be out of my possession since he disappeared, and I mean to watch in those chambers myself this very night."

Emily, seriously alarmed for the count, united her entreaties with those of the Lady Blanche, to dissuade him from his purpose.

"What should I fear?" said he. "I have no faith in supernatural combats; and for human opposition I shall be prepared; nay, I will even promise not to watch alone."

"But who, dear sir, will have courage enough to watch with you?" said Emily.

"My son," replied the count. "If I am not carried off in he night," added he smiling, "you shall hear the result of my dventure to-morrow."

The count and Lady Blanche shortly afterwards took leave f Emily, and returned to the château, where he informed Henri of his intention, who, not without some secret reluctance, onsented to be the partner of his watch; and when the design vas mentioned after supper, the countess was terrified, and he baron and M. Du Pont joined with her in entreating that e would not tempt his fate as Ludovico had done. "We know ıot," added the baron, "the nature or the power of an evil pirit; and that such a spirit haunts those chambers can now, think, scarcely be doubted. Beware, my lord, how you pro- oke his vengeance, since it has already given us one terrible xample of its malice. I allow it may be probable that the pirits of the dead are permitted to return to the earth only n occasions of high import; but the present import may be our destruction."

The count could not forbear smiling. "Do you think, then, aron," said he, "that my destruction is of sufficient import- nce to draw back to earth the soul of the departed? Alas! ny good friend, there is no occasion for such means to accom- lish the destruction of any individual. Wherever the mystery ests, I trust I shall this night be able to detect it. You know am not superstitious."

The count took leave of his family for the night with an ssumed gaiety, which but ill concealed the anxiety that de- ressed his spirits, and retired to the north apartments, accom- anied by his son, and followed by the baron, M. Du Pont, nd some of the domestics, who all bade him good night at he outer door. In these chambers everything appeared as vhen he had last been here: even in the bedroom no alteration vas visible, where he lighted his own fire, for none of the lomestics could be prevailed upon to venture thither. After arefully examining the chamber and the oriel, the count and Henri drew their chairs upon the hearth, set a bottle of wine nd a lamp before them, laid their swords upon the table, and,

stirring the wood into a blaze, began to converse on indifferent topics. But Henri was often silent and abstracted, and sometimes threw a glance of mingled awe and curiosity round the gloomy apartment; while the count gradually ceased to converse, and sat either lost in thought, or reading a volume of Tacitus, which he had brought to beguile the tediousness of the night.

CHAPTER XXIV

The Baron Saint Foix, whom anxiety for his friend had kept awake, rose early to inquire the event of the night; when, as he passed the count's closet, hearing steps within, he knocked at the door, and it was opened by his friend himself. Rejoicing to see him in safety, and curious to learn the occurrences of the night, he had not immediately leisure to observe the unusual gravity that overspread the features of the count, whose reserved answers first occasioned him to notice it. The count, then smiling, endeavoured to treat the subject of his curiosity with levity; but the baron was serious, and pursued his inquiries so closely, that the count at length, resuming his gravity, said, "Well, my friend, press the subject no further, I entreat you; and let me request also that you will hereafter be silent upon anything you may think extraordinary in my future conduct. I do not scruple to tell you that I am unhappy, and that the watch of the last night has not assisted me to discover Ludovico; upon every occurrence of the night you must excuse my reserve."

"But where is Henri?" said the baron with surprise and disappointment at this denial.

"He is well, in his own apartment," replied the count. "You will not question him on this topic, since you know my wish."

"Certainly not," said the baron, somewhat chagrined, "since it would be displeasing to you; but methinks, my friend, you might rely on my discretion, and drop this unusual reserve."

"Let us talk no more upon the subject," said the count, "you may be assured that no ordinary circumstance has imposed

his silence upon me, towards a friend whom I have called so or near thirty years; and my present reserve cannot make you uestion either my esteem, or the sincerity of my friendship."

"I will not doubt either," said the baron, "though you must llow me to express my surprise at this silence."

"To me I will allow it," replied the count; "but I earnestly ntreat that you will forbear to notice it to my family, as vell as everything remarkable you may observe in my conduct owards them."

The baron readily promised this; and after conversing for ome time on general topics, they descended to the breakfast-oom, where the count met his family with a cheerful counten-nce, and evaded their inquiries by employing light ridicule nd assuming an air of uncommon gaiety, while he assured hem that they need not apprehend anything from the north hambers, since Henri and himself had been permitted to eturn from them in safety.

Henri, however, was less successful in disguising his feelings. 'rom his countenance an expression of terror was not entirely aded; he was often silent and thoughtful; and when he ttempted to laugh at the eager inquiries of Mademoiselle Bearn, it was evidently only an attempt.

In the evening, the count called, as he had promised, at the onvent, and Emily was surprised to perceive a mixture of layful ridicule and of reserve in his mention of the north partment. Of what had occurred there, however, he said othing; and when she ventured to remind him of his promise o tell her the result of his inquiries, and to ask if he had eceived any proof that those chambers were haunted, his ook became solemn for a moment: then, seeming to recollect imself, he smiled, and said, "My dear Emily believe me the pparition of the dead comes not on light or sportive errands, o terrify or to surprise the timid." He paused, and fell into momentary thoughtfulness, and then added, "We will say o more on this subject."

Soon after, he took leave; and when Emily joined some of he nuns, she was surprised to find them acquainted with a

circumstance which she had carefully avoided to mention, and expressing their admiration of his intrepidity in having dared to pass a night in the apartment whence Ludovico had disappeared; for she had not considered with what rapidity a tale of wonder circulates. The nuns had acquired their information from peasants who brought fruit to the monastery, and whose whole attention had been fixed, since the disappearance of Ludovico, on what was passing in the castle.

Sister Frances contended, that the count had acted with the bravery of a virtuous mind. He knew himself guiltless of aught that should provoke a good spirit, and did not fear the spells of an evil one, since he could claim the protection of a higher power—of Him who can command the wicked and will protect the innocent.

"The guilty cannot claim that protection!" said Sister Agnes. "Let the count look to his conduct, that he do not forfeit his claim! Yet who is he that shall dare to call himself innocent?—all earthly innocence is but comparative. Yet still how wide asunder are the extremes of guilt, and to what a horrible depth may we fall! Oh!——"

The nun, as she concluded, uttered a shuddering sigh, that startled Emily, who looking up perceived the eyes of Agnes fixed on hers; after which the sister rose, took her hand, gazed earnstly upon her countenance for some moments in silence, and then said:

"You are young—you are innocent! I mean you are yet innocent of any great crime!—But you have passions in your heart,—scorpions: they sleep now—beware how you awaken them!—they will sting you, even unto death!"

Emily, affected by these words, and by the solemnity with which they were delivered, could not suppress her tears.

When they had withdrawn, Frances, observing Emily's emotions, said, "Do not be alarmed, our sister is often thus deranged, though I have not lately seen her so frantic; her usual mood is melancholy. This fit has been coming on for

veral days; seclusion and the customary treatment will estore her."

"But how rationally she conversed!" observed Emily; "her leas followed each other in perfect order."

"Yes," replied the nun, "this is nothing new: nay, I have ometimes known her argue not only with method but with cuteness, and then in a moment start off into madness."

"Her conscience seems afflicted," said Emily; "did you ever ear what circumstance reduced her to this deplorable ondition?"

"I have," replied the nun, who said no more till Emily epeated the question; when she added in a low voice, and ooking significantly towards the other boarders, "I cannot ell you now; but if you think it worth your while, come to ıy cell tonight, when our sisterhood are at rest, and you shall ear more; but remember we rise to midnight prayers, and ome either before or after midnight."

Emily promised to remember; and the abbess soon after ppearing, they spoke no more of the unhappy nun.

When the nuns had retired to rest, Emily stole to her ppointment with Sister Frances, whom she found in her cell, ngaged in prayer before a little table. Turning her eyes, as ıe door opened, she beckoned to Emily to come in, who, aving done so, seated herself in silence beside the nun's little ıattress of straw, till her orisons should conclude. The latter oon rose from her knees; and taking down the lamp and lacing it on the table, Emily perceived there a human skull nd bones lying beside an hourglass; but the nun, without bserving her emotion, sat down on the mattress by her, saying, Your curiosity, sister, has made you punctual; but you have othing remarkable to hear in the history of poor Agnes, of hom I avoided to speak in the presence of my lay-sisters, only ecause I would not publish her crime to them."

" I shall consider your confidence in me as a favour," said mily, "and will not misuse it."

"Sister Agnes," resumed the nun, "is of a noble family, as ıe dignity of her air must already have informed you; but I

will not dishonour their name so much as to reveal it. Love was the occasion of her crime and of her madness. She was beloved by a gentleman of inferior fortune; and her father, as I have heard, bestowing her on a nobleman whom she disliked, an ill-governed passion proved her destruction. Every obligation of virtue and of duty was forgotten, and she profaned her marriage-vows; but her guilt was soon detected, and she would have fallen a sacrifice to the vengeance of her husband, had not her father contrived to convey her from his power. By what means he did this, I never could learn; but he secreted her in this convent, where he afterwards prevailed with her to take the veil, while a report was circulated in the world that she was dead; and the father, to save his daughter, assisted the rumour, and employed such means as induced her husband to believe she had become a victim to his jealousy. You look surprised," added the nun, observing Emily's countenance; "I allow the story is uncommon, but not, I believe, without a parallel."

"Pray proceed," said Emily, "I am interested."

"The story is already told," resumed the nun; "I have only to mention, that the long struggle which Agnes suffered between love, remorse, and a sense of the duties she had taken upon herself in becoming of our Order, at length unsettled her reason. At first she was frantic and melancholy by quick alternatives; then she sank into a deep and settled melancholy, which still, however, has at times been interrupted by fits of wildness, and of late these have again been frequent."

Emily was affected by the history of the sister, some part of whose story brought to her remembrance that of the Marchioness de Villeroi, who had also been compelled by her father to forsake the object of her affections, for a nobleman of his choice; but, from what Dorothée had related, there appeared no reason to suppose that she had escaped the vengeance of a jealous husband, or to doubt for a moment the innocence of her conduct. But Emily asked Frances if she remembered her in her youth, and whether she was then beautiful.

"I was not here at the time when she took the vows," replied Frances, "which is so long ago that few of the present sisterhood, I believe, were witnesses of the ceremony; nay, even our lady mother did not then preside over the convent; but I can remember when Sister Agnes was a very beautiful woman. She retains that air of high rank which always distinguished her, but her beauty, you must perceive, is fled; I can scarcely discover even a vestige of the loveliness that once animated her features."

"It is strange," said Emily, "but there are moments when her countenance has appeared familiar to my memory! You will think me fanciful; and I think myself so, for I certainly never saw Sister Agnes before I came to this convent, and I must therefore have seen some person whom she strongly resembles, though of this I have no recollection."

"You have been interested by the deep melancholy of her countenance," said Frances, "and I might as reasonably think I perceive a likeness between you and Agnes, as you, that you have seen her anywhere but in this convent, since this has been her place of refuge for nearly as many years as make your age."

"Indeed!" said Emily.

"Yes," rejoined Frances, "and why does that circumstance excite your surprise?"

Emily did not appear to notice this question, but remained thoughtful for a few moments, and then said, "It was about that same period that the Marchioness de Villeroi expired."

"That is an odd remark," said Frances.

Emily, recalled from her reverie, smiled, and gave the conversation another turn; but it soon came back to the subject of the unhappy nun, and Emily remained in the cell of Sister Frances till the midnight bell aroused her; when apologizing for having interrupted the sister's repose till this late hour, they quitted the cell together. Emily returned to her chamber, and the nun, bearing a glimmering taper, went to her devotion in the chapel.

Several days followed, during which Emily saw neither the count, nor any of his family; and when at length he appeared, she remarked, with concern, that his air was unusually disturbed.

"My spirits are harassed," said he, in answer to her anxious inquiries, "and I mean to change my residence for a little while, an experiment which I hope will restore my mind to its usual tranquillity. My daughter and myself will accompany the Baron Saint Foix to his château. It lies in a valley of the Pyrenees that opens towards Gascony, and I have been thinking, Emily, that when you set out for La Vallée we may go part of the way together; it would be a satisfaction to me to guard you towards your home."

She thanked the count for his friendly consideration, and lamented that the necessity for her going first to Toulouse would render this plan impracticable. "But when you are at the baron's residence," she added, "you will be only a short journey from La Vallée, and I think, sir, you will not leave the country without visiting me; it is unnecessary to say with what pleasure I should receive you and the Lady Blanche."

"I do not doubt it," replied the count, "and I will not deny myself and Blanche the pleasure of visiting you, if your affairs should allow you to be at La Vallée about the time when we can meet you there."

When Emily said that she should hope to see the countess also, she was not sorry to learn that this lady was going, accompanied by Mademoiselle Bearn, to pay a visit for a few weeks to a family in Lower Languedoc.

The count, after some further conversation on his intended journey and on the arrangement of Emily's, took leave; and many days did not succeed this visit before a second letter from M. Quesnel informed her that he was then at Toulouse, that La Vallée was at liberty, and that he wished her to set off for the former place, where he awaited her arrival with all possible dispatch, since his own affairs pressed him to return to Gascony. Emily did not hesitate to obey him; and having taken an affecting leave of the count's family, in which

M. Du Pont was still included, and of her friends at the convent, she set out for Toulouse attended by the unhappy Annette, and guarded by a steady servant of the count.

Emily pursued her journey without any accident, along the plains of Languedoc towards the north-west; and on this her return to Toulouse, which she had last left with Madame Montoni, she thought much on the melancholy fate of her aunt.

Other thoughts and other emotions succeeded as Emily drew near the well-known scenes of her early love, and considered that Valancourt was lost to her and to himself for ever. At length she came to the brow of the hill, whence, on her departure for Italy, she had given a farewell look to this beloved landscape, amongst whose woods and fields she had so often walked with Valancourt, and where he was then to inhabit, when she would be far, far away !

This recollection was too much for her heart, and she sank back in the carriage, nor once looked up till it stopped at the gates of what was now her own mansion.

These being opened, and by the servant to whose care the château had been entrusted, the carriage drove into the court, where alighting, she hastily passed through the great hall, now silent and solitary, to a large oak parlour, the common sitting-room of the late Madame Montoni; where, instead of being received by M. Quesnel, she found a letter from him, informing her that business of consequence had obliged him to leave Toulouse two days before. Emily was, upon the whole, not sorry to be spared his presence, since his abrupt departure appeared to indicate the same indifference with which he had formerly regarded her. This letter informed her, also, of the progress he had made in the settlement of her affairs; and concluded with directions concerning the forms of some business which remained for her to transact. But M. Quesnel's unkindness did not long occupy her thoughts, which returned to the remembrance of the persons she had been accustomed to see in this mansion, and chiefly of the ill-guided and unfortunate Madame Montoni. In the room where she now sat, she had breakfasted with her on the morning of their departure

for Italy; and the view of it brought most forcibly to her recollection all she had herself suffered at that time, and the many gay expectations which her aunt had formed respecting the journey before her. While Emily's mind was thus engaged, her eyes wandered unconsciously to a large window that looked upon the garden, and here new memorials of the past spoke to her heart; for she saw extended before her the very avenue in which she had parted with Valancourt on the eve of her journey; and all the anxiety, the tender interest he had shown concerning her future happiness, and the truth of his affection, came fresh to her memory.

On the following morning serious occupation recovered her from such melancholy reflections; for, being desirous of quitting Toulouse, and of hastening on to La Vallée, she made some inquiries into the condition of the estate, and immediately dispatched a part of the necessary business concerning it, according to the directions of M. Quesnel. It required a strong effort to abstract her thoughts from other interests sufficiently to attend to this; but she was rewarded for her exertions by again experiencing that employment is the surest antidote to sorrow.

This day was devoted entirely to business; and among other concerns she employed means to learn the situation of all her poor tenants, that she might relieve their wants, or confirm their comforts.

In the evening, her spirits were so much strengthened that she thought she could bear to visit the gardens where she had so often walked with Valancourt; and knowing that if she delayed to do so their scenes would only affect her the more whenever they should be viewed, she took advantage of the present state of her mind, and entered them.

Passing hastily the gate leading from the court into the gardens, she hurried up the great avenue, scarcely permitting her memory to dwell for a moment on the circumstance of her having here parted with Valancourt, and soon quitted this for other walks less interesting to her heart. These brought her at length to the flight of steps that led from the lower

garden to the terrace, on seeing which, she became agitated, and hesitated whether to ascend; but, her resolution returning, she proceeded.

These recollections becoming too painful to be endured, she abruptly left the pavilion, and, anxious to escape from the memorials of her departed happiness, returned towards the château. As she passed along the terrace, she perceived a person walking with a slow step and a dejected air, under the trees, at some distance. The twilight, which was now deep, would not allow her to distinguish who it was, and she imagined it to be one of the servants, till the sound of her steps seeming to reach him, he turned half round, and she thought she saw Valancourt!

Whoever it was, he instantly struck among the thickets on the left, and disappeared; while Emily, her eyes fixed on the place whence he had vanished, and her frame trembling so excessively that she could scarcely support herself, remained for some moments unable to quit the spot, and scarcely conscious of existence. With her recollection her strength returned, and she hurried towards the house, where she did not venture to inquire who had been in the garden, lest she should betray her emotion; and she sat down alone, endeavouring to recollect the figure, air, and features of the person she had just seen.

The following day was occupied by the visits of several neighbouring families, formerly intimate with Madame Montoni, who came to condole with Emily on her death, to congratulate her upon the acquisition of these estates, and to inquire about Montoni, and concerning the strange reports they had heard of her own situation; all which was done with the utmost decorum, and the visitors departed with as much composure as they had arrived.

Emily was wearied by these formalities, and disgusted by the subservient manners of many persons, who had thought her scarcely worthy of common attention while she was believed to be a dependent of Madame Montoni!

It was evening before she was left alone, and she then wished to have refreshed her spirits in the free air of her

garden; but she feared to go thither, lest she should meet again the person whom she had seen on the preceding night, and he should prove to be Valancourt. The suspense and anxiety she suffered on this subject, she found all her efforts unable to control; and her secret wish to see Valancourt once more, though unseen by him, powerfully prompted her to go: but prudence and a delicate pride restrained her; and she determined to avoid the possibility of throwing herself in his way, by forbearing to visit the gardens for several days.

When, after near a week, she again ventured thither, she made Annette her companion, and confined her walk to the lower grounds; but often started as the leaves rustled in the breeze, imagining that some person was among the thickets; and at the turn of every alley she looked forward with apprehensive expectation. She pursued her walk thoughtfully and silently; for her agitation would not suffer her to converse with Annette, to whom, however, thought and silence were so intolerable that she did not scruple at length to talk to her mistress.

"Dear madame," said she, "why do you start so ? one would think you knew what has happened."

"What has happened ?" said Emily in a faltering voice, and trying to command her emotion.

"The night before last, you know, madame——"

"I know nothing, Annette," replied her lady in a more hurried voice.

"The night before last, madame, there was a robber in the garden."

"A robber !" said Emily, in an eager yet doubting tone.

"I suppose he was a robber, madame—what else could he be ?"

"Where did you see him, Annette ?" rejoined Emily, looking round her, and turning back towards the château.

"It was not I that saw him, madame; it was Jean, the gardener. It was twelve o'clock at night; and as he was coming across the court to go the back way into the house, what should he see but somebody walking in the avenue that fronts the

garden-gate ! So, with that, Jean guessed how it was, and he went into the house for his gun."

"His gun !" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madame, his gun; and then he came out into the court to watch him. Presently he sees him come slowly down the avenue, and lean over the garden-gate, and look up at the house for a long time; and I warrant he examined it well, and settled what window he should break in at."

"But the gun," said Emily—"the gun !"

"Yes, madame, all in good time. Presently, Jean says, the robber opened the gate, and was coming into the court, and then he thought proper to ask him his business: so he called out again, and bade him say who he was, and what he wanted. But the man would do neither; but turned upon his heel, and passed into the garden again. Jean knew then well enough how it was, and so he fired after him."

"Fired !" exclaimed Emily.

"Yes, madame, fired off his gun; but, Holy Virgin ! what makes you look so pale, madame ? The man was not killed,—I dare say; but if he was, his comrades carried him off: for, when Jean went in the morning to look for the body, it was gone, and nothing to be seen but a track of blood on the ground. Jean followed it, that he might find out where the man got into the garden, but it was lost in the grass, and——"

Annette was interrupted: for Emily's spirits died away, and she would have fallen to the ground, if the girl had not caught her, and supported her to a bench close to them.

When, after a long absence, her senses returned, Emily desired to be led to her apartment and though she trembled with anxiety to inquire further on the subject of her alarm, she found herself too ill at present to dare the intelligence which it was possible she might receive of Valancourt. Having dismissed Annette that she might weep and think at liberty, she endeavoured to recollect the exact air of the person whom she had seen on the terrace, and still her fancy gave her the figure of Valancourt. She had, indeed, scarcely a doubt that it was he whom she had seen, and at whom the gardener had

fired; for the manner of the latter person, as described by Annette, was not that of a robber: nor did it appear probable that a robber would have come alone to break into a house so spacious as this.

When Emily thought herself sufficiently recovered to listen to what Jean might have to relate, she sent for him; but he could inform her of no circumstances that might lead to a knowledge of the person who had been shot, or of the consequence of the wound; and after severely reprimanding him for having fired with bullets, and ordering diligent inquiry to be made in the neighbourhood for the discovery of the wounded person, she dismissed him, and herself remained in the same state of terrible suspense.

Her indisposition, and the business she engaged in relative to this estate, had already protracted her say at Toulouse beyond the period she had formerly fixed for her departure to La Vallée; and now she was unwilling to leave the only place where it seemed possible that certainty could be obtained on the subject of her distress. But the time was come when her presence was necessary at La Vallée, a letter from the Lady Blanche now informing her that the count and herself, being then at the château of the Baron Saint Foix, proposed to visit her at La Vallée, on their way home, as soon as they should be informed of her arrival there. Blanche added, that they made this visit with the hope of inducing her to return with them to Château-le-Blanc.

Emily having replied to the letter of her friend, and said that she should be at La Vallée in a few days, made hasty preparations for the journey; and, in thus leaving Toulouse, endeavoured to support herself in the belief that, if any fatal accident had happened to Valancourt, she must in this interval have heard of it.

CHAPTER XXV

On the following morning Emily left Toulouse at an early hour, and reached La Vallée about sunset. With the melancholy

he experienced on the review of the place which had been he residence of her parents, and the scene of her earliest lelight was mingled, after the first shock had subsided, a ender and indescribable pleasure.

One of Emily's earliest inquiries after her arrival at La Vallée was concerning Theresa, her father's old servant, whom t may be remembered that M. Quesnel had turned from the nouse, when it was let, without any provision. Understanding hat she lived in a cottage at no great distance, Emily walked hither, and, on approaching, was pleased to see that her nabitation was pleasantly situated on a green slope, sheltered by a tuft of oaks, and had an appearance of comfort and extreme neatness. She found the old woman within, picking vine-stalks, who on perceiving her young mistress, was nearly overcome with joy.

"Ah ! my dear young lady !" said she, "I thought I should never see you again in this world, when I heard you was gone to that outlandish country. I have been hardly used since you went; I little thought they would have turned me out of my old master's family in my old age !"

Emily lamented the circumstance, and then assured her that she would make her latter days comfortable, and expressed satisfaction on seeing her in so pleasant a habitation.

Theresa thanked her with tears, adding, "Yes, mademoiselle, it is a very comfortable home, thanks to the kind friend who took me out of my distress when you was too far off to help me, and placed me here ! I little thought——; but no more of that—"

"And who was this kind friend ?" said Emily; "whoever t was, I shall consider him as mine also."

"Ah ! mademoiselle ! that friend forbade me to blazon the good deed—I must not say who it was. But how does that dear young gentleman do, M. Valancourt ? He was a handsome youth, and a good one; is he well, mademoiselle ?"

Emily was much agitated.

"A blessing on him !" continued Theresa. "Ah, my dear young lady, you need not look so shy; I know all about it. Do

you think I do not know that he loves you? Why, when you was away, mademoiselle, he used to come to the château and walk about it so disconsolate! He would go into every room in the lower part of the house, and sometimes he would sit himself down in a chair, with his arms across, and his eyes on the floor, and there he would sit and think, and think, for the hour together. And then——"

"Theresa," said Emily seriously, "you must name the chevalier no more!"

"Not name him, mademoiselle!" cried Theresa: "what times are come up now? Why, I love the chevalier next to my old master and you, mademoiselle."

"Perhaps your love was not well bestowed, then," replied Emily, trying to conceal her tears; "but, however that might be, we shall meet no more."

"Meet no more!—not well bestowed!" exclaimed Theresa. "What do I hear? No, mademoiselle, my love was well bestowed, for it was the Chevalier Valancourt who gave me this cottage, and has supported me in my old age ever since M. Quesnel turned me from my master's house."

"The Chevalier Valancourt!" said Emily, trembling extremely.

"Yes, mademoiselle, he himself, though he made me promise not to tell; but how could one help, when one heard him ill spoken of? The chevalier found me, and bought me this cottage, and gave me money to furnish it, and bade me seek out another poor woman to live with me; and he ordered his brother's steward to pay me every quarter that which has supported me in comfort. Think, then, mademoiselle, whether I have not reason to speak well of the chevalier. And there are others who could have afforded it better than he; and I am afraid he has hurt himself by his generosity, for quarter-day has gone by long since, and no money for me! But do not weep so, mademoiselle; you are not sorry to hear of the poor chevalier's goodness?"

"Sorry!" said Emily, and wept the more. "But how long is it since you have seen him?"

"Not this many a day, mademoiselle."

"When did you hear of him ?" inquired Emily with increased emotion.

"Alas ! never since he went away so suddenly into Languedoc; and he was but just come from Paris then, or I should have seen him I am sure. Quarter-day is gone by long since, and, as I said, no money for me; and I begin to fear some harm has happened to him; and if I was not so far from Estuvière and so lame, I should have gone to inquire before this time; and I have nobody to send so far."

Emily's anxiety as to the fate of Valancourt was now scarcely endurable; and, since propriety would not suffer her to send to the château of his brother, she requested that Theresa would immediately hire some person to go to his steward from herself; and when he asked for the quarterage due to her, to make inquiries concerning Valancourt. But she first made Theresa promise never to mention her name in this affair, nor ever with that of the Chevalier Valancourt; and her former faithfulness to M. St. Aubert induced Emily to confide in her assurances. Theresa now joyfully undertook to procure a person for this errand; and then Emily, after giving her a sum of money to supply her with present comforts, returned with spirits heavily oppressed to her home.

Meanwhile Count de Villefort and Lady Blanche had passed a pleasant fortnight at the Château de Saint Foix with the baron and baroness, during which they made frequent excursions among the mountains, and were delighted with the romantic wildness of Pyrenean scenery. It was with regret that the count bade adieu to his old friends, although with the hope of being soon united with them in one family; for it was settled that M. Saint Foix, who now attended them into Gascony, should receive the hand of the Lady Blanche upon their arrival at Château-le-Blanc. As the road from the baron's residence to La Vallée was over some of the wildest tracts of the Pyrenees, and where a carriage-wheel had never passed, the count hired mules for himself and his family, as well as a couple of stout guides, who were well armed, in-

formed of all the passes of the mountains, and who boasted too that they were acquainted with every brake and dingle in the way.

The count left the Château de Saint Foix early in the morning, with an intention of passing the night at a little inn upon the mountains, about half-way to La Vallée, of which his guides had informed him; and though this was frequented chiefly by Spanish muleteers on their route into France, and of course would afford only sorry accommodation, the count had no alternative, for it was the only place like an inn on the road.

After a day of admiration and fatigue, the travellers found themselves, about sunset, in a woody valley overlooked on every side by abrupt heights. They had proceeded for many leagues without seeing a human habitation, and had only heard now and then at a distance the melancholy tinkling of a sheep-bell: but now they caught the notes of merry music, and presently saw within a little green recess among the rocks a group of mountaineers tripping through a dance. The count, who could not look upon the happiness any more than on the misery of others with indifference, halted to enjoy this scene of simple pleasure.

But the lengthening shadows reminded the travellers that they had no time to lose; and leaving the joyous group, they pursued their way towards the little inn which was to shelter them from the night.

Blanche viewed the scene in silence. But her enthusiasm sunk into apprehension, when, as the shadows deepened, she looked upon the doubtful precipice that bordered the road, as well as on the various fantastic forms of danger that glimmered through the obscurity beyond it; and she asked her father how far they were from the inn, and whether he did not conceive the road to be dangerous at this hour. The count repeated the first question to the guides, who returned a doubtful answer, adding, that when it was darker, it would be safest to rest till the moon rose. "It is scarcely

safe to proceed now," said the count; but the guides, assuring him that there was no danger, went on.

Having now, however, arrived at a level spot somewhat sheltered from the air by overhanging cliffs, and by a wood of larch that rose over a precipice on the left, and the guides being yet ignorant how far they were from the inn, the travellers determined to rest till the moon should rise or the storm disperse. Blanche, recalled to a sense of the present moment, looked on the surrounding gloom with terror; but giving her hand to Saint Foix, she alighted, and the whole party entered a kind of cave, if such it could be called, which was only a shallow cavity formed by the curve of impending rocks. A light being struck, a fire was kindled, whose blaze afforded some degree of cheerfulness and no small comfort; for though the day had been hot, the night air of this mountainous region was chilling; a fire was partly necessary also to keep off the wolves with which those wilds were infested.

Provisions being spread upon a projection of the rock, the count and his family partook of a supper, which in a scene less rude would have been thought less excellent.

The moon now afforded a stronger though still an uncertain light, as she moved among broken clouds; and the travellers, led by the sound, recommenced their journey along the brow of the precipice, preceded by a single torch that now contended with the moonlight; for the guides, believing they should reach the inn soon after sunset, had neglected to provide more.

While the guides carried forward the torch to examine the cliff, the count, remaining with Blanche and Saint Foix at its foot, under the shadow of the woods, endeavoured again to beguile the time by conversation.

A shout from the guides aroused their attention, after which, in a few minutes, one of the count's servants returned with intelligence that a path was found, and they immediately hastened to join the guides, when they all ascended a little winding way cut in the rock among the thickets of dwarf wood, and after much toil and some danger reached the summit, where several ruined towers surrounded by a massy wall

rose to their view, partially illumined by the moonlight. The space around the building was silent, and apparently forsaken: but the count was cautious. "Step softly," said he in a low voice, "while we reconnoitre the edifice."

Having proceeded silently along for some paces, they stopped at a gate whose portals were terrible even in ruins; and, after a moment's hesitation, passed on to the court of entrance, but paused again at the head of a terrace, which, branching from it, ran along the brow of a precipice. Over this rose the main body of the edifice, which was now seen to be not a watch-tower, but one of those ancient fortresses that from age and neglect had fallen to decay. Many parts of it, however, appeared to be still entire; it was built of grey stone, in the heavy Saxon-Gothic style, with enormous round towers, buttresses of proportionable strength, and the arch of the large gate which seemed to open into the hall of the fabric, was round, as was that of a window above. The air of solemnity which must so strongly have characterized the pile even in the days of its early strength, was now considerably heightened by its shattered battlements and half-demolished walls, and by the huge masses of ruin scattered in its wide area, now silent and grass-grown. In this court of entrance stood the gigantic remains of an oak, that seemed to have flourished and decayed with the building, which it still appeared frowningly to protect by the few remaining branches, leafless and moss-grown, that crowned its trunk, and whose wide extent told how enormous the tree had been in a former age. This fortress was evidently once of great strength, and from its situation on a point of rock impending over a deep glen, had been of great power to annoy as well as to resist: the count, therefore, as he stood surveying it, was somewhat surprised that it had been suffered, ancient as it was, to sink into ruins, and its present lonely and deserted air excited in his breast emotions of melancholy awe. While he indulged for a moment these emotions, he thought he heard a sound of remote voices steal upon the stillness from within the building, the front of which he again surveyed with scrutinizing eyes, but yet no

light was visible. He now determined to walk round the fort, to that remote part of it whence he thought the voices had arisen, that he might examine whether any light could be discerned there, before he ventured to knock at the gate: for this purpose he entered upon the terrace, where the remains of cannon were yet apparent in the thick walls: but he had not proceeded many paces when his steps were suddenly arrested by the loud barking of a dog within, and which he fancied to be the same whose voice had been the means of bringing the travellers thither. It now appeared certain that the place was inhabited; and the count returned to consult again with Saint Foix, whether he should try to obtain admittance, for its wild aspect had somewhat shaken his former resolution; but after a second consultation, he submitted to the considerations which before determined him, and which were strengthened by the discovery of the dog that guarded the fort, as well as by the stillness that pervaded it. He therefore ordered one of his servants to knock at the gate: who was advancing to obey him, when a light appeared through the loophole of one of the towers, and the count called loudly: but receiving no answer, he went up to the gate himself, and struck upon it with an iron-pointed pole which had assisted him to climb the steep. When the echoes had ceased that this blow had awakened, the renewed barking—and there were now more than one dog—was the only sound that was heard. The count stepped back a few paces to observe whether the light was in the tower; and perceiving that it was gone, he returned to the portal, and had lifted the pole to strike again, when again he fancied he heard the murmur of voices within, and paused to listen. He was confirmed in the supposition, but they were too remote to be heard otherwise than in a murmur, and the count now let the pole fall heavily upon the gate, when almost immediately a profound silence followed. It was apparent that the people within had heard the sound, and their caution in admitting strangers gave him a favourable opinion of them. "They are either hunters or shepherds," said he, "who, like ourselves, have probably sought

shelter from the night within these walls, and are fearful of admitting strangers, lest they should prove robbers. I will endeavour to remove their fears." So saying, he called aloud, "We are friends, who ask shelter from the night." In a few moments steps were heard within, which approached, and a voice then inquired—"Who calls?" "Friends," repeated the count; "open the gates, and you shall know more." Strong bolts were now heard to be undrawn, and a man armed with a hunting-spear appeared. "What is it you want at this hour?" said he. The count beckoned his attendants, and then answered, that he wished to inquire the way to the nearest cabin. "Are you so little acquainted with these mountains," said the man, "as not to know that there is none within several leagues? I cannot show you the way; you must seek it—there's a moon." Saying this, he was closing the gate, and the count was turning away half disappointed and half afraid, when another voice was heard from above; and on looking up, he saw a light and a man's face at the grate of the portal. "Stay, friend, you have lost your way?" said the voice. "You are hunters, I suppose, like ourselves? I will be with you presently." The voice ceased, and the light disappeared. Blanche had been alarmed by the appearance of the man who had opened the gate, and she now entreated her father to quit the place: but the count had observed the hunter's spear which he carried, and the words from the tower encouraged him to await the event. The gate was soon opened: and several men in hunters' habits, who had heard above what had passed below, appeared; and having listened some time to the count, told him he was welcome to rest there for the night. They then pressed him with much courtesy to enter, and to partake of such fare as they were about to sit down to. The count, who had observed them attentively while they spoke, was cautious and somewhat suspicious; but he was also weary, fearful of the approaching storm, and of encountering Alpine heights in the obscurity of night: being likewise somewhat confident in the strength and number of his attendants, he, after some further consideration, determined to accept the invitation.

With this resolution he called his servants, who advancing round the tower, behind which some of them had silently listened to this conference, followed their lord, the Lady Blanche, and Saint Foix, into the fortress. The strangers led them on to a large and rude hall, partially seen by a fire that blazed at its extremity, round which four men in hunters' dress were seated, and on the hearth were several dogs stretched in sleep. In the middle of the hall stood a large table, and over the fire some part of an animal was boiling. As the count approached, the men arose: and the dogs, half raising themselves, looked fiercely at the strangers, but on hearing their masters' voices, kept their postures on the hearth.

Blanche looked round this gloomy and spacious hall; then at the men, and to her father, who, smiling cheerfully at her, addressed himself to the hunters. "This is an hospitable hearth," said he: "the blaze of the fire is reviving after having wandered so long in these dreary wilds. Your dogs are tired; what success have you had?" "Such as we usually have," replied one of the men, who had been seated in the hall; "we kill our game with tolerable certainty."—"These are fellow-hunters," said one of the men who had brought the count hither, "that have lost their way, and I have told them there is room enough in the fort for us all."—"Very true, very true," replied his companion: "what luck have you had in the chase, brothers? We have killed two izards, and that you will say is pretty well."—"You mistake, friend," said the count; "we are not hunters, but travellers; but if you will admit us to hunters' fare we shall be well contented, and will repay your kindness."—"Sit down, then, brother," said one of the men: "Jacques, lay more fuel on the fire, the kid will soon be ready; bring a seat for the lady too. Ma'amselle, will you taste our brandy? it is true Barcelona, and as bright as ever flowed from a keg." Blanche timidly smiled, and was going to refuse, when her father prevented her, by taking, with a good-humoured air, the glass offered to his daughter; and M. Saint Foix, who was seated next her, pressed her hand, and gave her an encouraging look; but her attention was engaged by a

man who sat silently by the fire, observing Saint Foix with a steady and earnest eye.

"You lead a jolly life here," said the count. "The life of a hunter is a pleasant and a healthy one; and the repose is sweet which succeeds to your labour."

"Yes," replied one of the hosts, "our life is pleasant enough. We live here only during the summer and autumnal months; in winter the place is dreary, and the swollen torrents that descend from the heights put a stop to the chase."

The count now made inquiry concerning the method of pursuing the chase among the rocks and precipices of these romantic regions, and was listening to a curious detail, when a horn was sounded at the gate. Blanche looked timidly at her father, who continued to converse on the subject of the chase, but whose countenance was somewhat expressive of anxiety, and who often turned his eyes towards that part of the hall nearest the gate. The horn sounded again, and a loud halloo succeeded. "There are some of our companions returned from their day's labour," said a man, going lazily from his seat towards the gate; and in a few minutes two men appeared, each with a gun over his shoulder and pistols in his belt. "What cheer, my lads? what cheer?" said they, as they approached. "What luck?" returned their companions: "have you brought home your supper? You shall have none else."

"Hah! who the devil have you brought home?" said they in bad Spanish, on perceiving the count's party; "are they from France, or Spain?—where did you meet with them?"

"They met with us; and a merry meeting too," replied his companion aloud in good French. "This chevalier and his party had lost their way, and asked a night's lodging in the fort." The others made no reply, but threw down a kind of knapsack, and drew forth several brace of birds. The bag sounded heavily as it fell to the ground, and the glitter of some bright metal within glanced on the eye of the count, who now surveyed with a more inquiring look the man that held the knapsack. He was a tall, robust figure, of a hard countenance, and had short black hair curling on his neck.

Instead of the hunter's dress, he wore a faded military uniform; sandals were laced on his broad legs: and a kind of short trousers hung from his waist. On his head he wore a leather cap, somewhat resembling in shape an ancient Roman helmet; but the brows that scowled beneath it would have characterized those of the barbarians who conquered Rome, rather than those of a Roman soldier. The count at length turned away his eyes, and remained silent and thoughtful, till, again raising them, he perceived a figure standing in an obscure part of the hall, fixed in attentive gaze on Saint Foix, who was conversing with Blanche, and did not observe this; but the count soon after saw the same man looking over the shoulder of the soldier as attentively at himself. He withdrew his eye when that of the count met it, who felt mistrust gathering fast upon his mind, but feared to betray it in his countenance, and, forcing his features to assume a smile, addressed Blanche on some indifferent subject. When he again looked round, he perceived that the soldier and his companion were gone.

The man who was called Jacques now returned from the stone gallery. "A fire is lighted there," said he, "and the birds are dressing; the table, too, is spread there, for that place is warmer than this."

His companions approved of the removal, and invited their guests to follow to the gallery; of whom Blanche appeared distressed and remained silent, and Saint Foix looked at the count, who said he preferred the comfortable blaze of the fire he was then near. The hunters, however, commended the warmth of the other apartment, and pressed his removal with such seeming courtesy, that the count, half doubting and half fearful of betraying his doubts, consented to go. The long and ruinous passages through which they went, somewhat daunted him; but the thunder, which now burst in loud peals above, made it dangerous to quit this place of shelter, and he forbore to provoke his conductors by showing that he distrusted them. The hunters led the way with a lamp: the count and Saint Foix, who wished to please their hosts by some instances of familiarity, carried each a seat, and Blanche

followed with faltering steps. As she passed on, part of her dress caught on a nail in the wall; and while she stopped, somewhat too scrupulously, to disengage it, the count, who was talking to Saint Foix, and neither of whom observed the circumstance, followed their conductor round an abrupt angle of the passage, and Blanche was left behind in darkness. The thunder prevented them from hearing her call; but, having disengaged her dress, she quickly followed, as she thought, the way they had taken. A light that glimmered at a distance confirmed this belief; and she proceeded towards an open door whence it issued, conjecturing the room beyond to be the stone gallery the men had spoken of. Hearing voices as she advanced, she paused within a few paces of the chamber, that she might be certain whether she was right; and from thence, by the light of a lamp that hung from the ceiling, observed four men seated round a table, over which they leaned in apparent consultation. In one of them she distinguished the features of him whom she had observed gazing at Saint Foix with such deep attention; and who was now speaking in an earnest, though restrained voice, till one of his companions seeming to oppose him, they spoke together in a loud and harsher tone. Blanche, alarmed by perceiving that neither her father nor Saint Foix was there, and terrified at the fierce countenances and manners of these men, was turning hastily from the chamber to pursue her search of the gallery, when she heard one of the men say:

"Let all dispute end here. Who talks of danger ? Follow my advice, and there will be none—secure *them,* and the rest are an easy prey." Blanche, struck with these words, paused a moment to hear more. "There is nothing to be got by the rest," said one of his companions; "I am never for blood when I can help it. Dispatch the two orthers, and our business is done: the rest may go."

Blanche's heart now sank with horror. Her first impulse was to retreat from the door; but when she would have gone, her trembling frame refused to support her, and having tottered a few paces to a more obscure part of the passage, she was

compelled to listen to the dreadful counsels of those who, she was no longer suffered to doubt, were banditti. In the next moment she heard the following words: "Why, you would not murder the whole *gang?*"

"I warrant our lives are as good as theirs," replied his comrade. "If we don't kill them, they will hang us: better they should die than we be hanged."

"Better! better!" cried his comrades.

"To commit murder is a hopeful way of escaping the gallows!" said the first ruffian—"many an honest fellow has run his head into the noose that way, though." There was a pause for some moments, during which they appeared to be considering.

"But how are we to manage this business?" said the second ruffian, "let us talk of that; here is no fear of there being booty enough, but how are we to secure it?"

"Aye, aye," said his comrades; "let us talk of that, and remember no time is to be lost."

"I am still for poison," observed the third: "but consider their number; why there are nine or ten of them, and armed too; when I saw so many at the gate, I was not for letting them in, you know, nor you either."

"I thought they might be some of our enemies," replied the second; "I did not so much mind numbers."

"But you must mind them now," rejoined his comrade, "or it will be worse for you. We are not more than six, and how can we master ten by open force? I tell you we must give some of them a dose, and the rest may then be managed."

"I'll tell you a better way," rejoined the other impatiently; "draw closer."

Blanche, who had listened to this conversation in an agony which it would be impossible to describe, could no longer distinguish what was said, for the ruffians now spoke in lowered voices; but the hope that she might save her friends from the plot, if she could find her way quickly to them, suddenly reanimated her spirits, and lent her strength enough to turn her steps in search of the gallery. Terror, however, and dark-

ness conspired against her; and having moved a few yards, the feeble light that issued from the chamber no longer even contended with the gloom, and her foot stumbling over a step that crossed the passage, she fell to the ground.

The noise startled the banditti, who became suddenly silent, and then all rushed to the passage, to examine whether any person was there who might have overheard their counsels. Blanche saw them approaching, and perceived their fierce and eager looks; but before she could raise herself, they discovered and seized her; and as they dragged her towards the chamber they had quitted, her screams drew from them horrible threatenings.

Having reached the room, they began to consult what they should do with her. "Let us first know what she has heard," said the chief robber. "How long have you been in the passage, lady, and what brought you there?"

"Let us first secure that picture," said one of his comrades, approaching the trembling Blanche. "Fair lady, by your leave, that picture; come, surrender it, or I shall seize it."

Blanche, entreating their mercy, immediately gave up the miniature, while another of the ruffians fiercely interrogated her concerning what she had overheard of their conversation; when her confusion and terror too plainly telling what her tongue feared to confess, the ruffians looked expressively upon one another, and two of them withdrew to a remote part of the room, as if to consult further.

"These are diamonds, by St. Peter!" exclaimed the fellow who had been examining the miniature, "and here is a very pretty picture too, 'faith; as handsome a young chevalier as you would wish to see by a summer's sun. Lady, this is your spouse, I warrant, for it is the spark that was in your company just now."

Blanche, sinking with terror, conjured him to have pity on her, and, delivering him her purse, promised to say nothing of what had passed if he would suffer her to return to her friends.

He smiled ironically, and was going to reply, when his

attention was called off by a distant noise; and while he listened, he grasped the arm of Blanche more firmly, as if he feared she would escape from him, and she again shrieked for help.

The approaching sounds called the ruffians from the other part of the chamber. "We are betrayed," said they; "but let us listen a moment, perhaps it is only our comrades come in from the mountains, and if so, our work is sure—listen !"

A distant discharge of shot confirmed this supposition for a moment: but in the next, the former sounds drawing nearer, the clashing of swords, mingled with the voices of loud contention and with heavy groans, was distinguished in the avenue leading to the chamber. While the ruffians prepared their arms, they heard themselves called by some of their comrades afar off, and then a shrill horn was sounded without the fortress, a signal, it appeared, they too well understood; for three of them, leaving the Lady Blanche to the care of the fourth, instantly rushed from the chamber.

While Blanche, trembling and nearly fainting, was supplicating for release, she heard amid the tumult that approached, the voice of Saint Foix; and she had scarcely renewed her shriek, when the door of the room was thrown open, and he appeared much disfigured with blood, and pursued by several ruffians. Blanche neither saw nor heard any more; her head swam, her sight failed, and she became senseless in the arms of the robber who had detained her.

When she recovered, she perceived, by the gloomy light that trembled round her, that she was in the same chamber; but neither the count, Saint Foix, nor any other person appeared, and she continued for some time entirely still, and nearly in a state of stupefaction. But the dreadful images of the past returning, she endeavoured to raise herself, that she might seek her friends; when a sullen groan at a little distance reminded her of Saint Foix, and of the condition in which she had seen him enter this room; then, starting from the floor by a sudden effort of horror, she advanced to the place whence the sound had proceeded, where a body was lying stretched

upon the pavement, and where, by the glimmering light of a lamp, she discovered the pale and disfigured countenance of Saint Foix. Her horror at that moment may be easily imagined. He was speechless; his eyes were half closed; and on the hand which she grasped in the agony of despair cold damps had settled. While she vainly repeated his name, and called for assistance, steps approached, and a person entered the chamber, who, she soon perceived, was not the count her father; but what was her astonishment, when, supplicating him to give his assistance to Saint Foix, she discovered Ludovico ! He scarcely paused to recognize her, but immediately bound up the wounds of the chevalier, and perceiving that he had fainted probably from loss of blood, ran for water; but he had been absent only a few moments, when Blanche heard other steps approaching; and while she was almost frantic with apprehension of the ruffians, the light of a torch flashed upon the walls, and then Count de Villefort appeared with an affrighted countenance, and breathless with impatience, calling upon his daughter. At the sound of his voice she rose, and ran to his arms, while he, letting fall the bloody sword he held, pressed her to his bosom in a transport of gratitude and joy, and then hastily inquired for Saint Foix, who now gave some signs of life. Ludovico soon after returning with water and brandy, the former was applied to his lips, and the latter to his temples and hands, and Blanche, at length, saw him unclose his eyes, and then heard him inquire for her: but the joy she felt on this occasion was interrupted by new alarms, when Ludovico said it would be necessary to remove M. Saint Foix immediately, and added, "The banditti that are out, my lord, were expected home an hour ago, and they will certainly find us if we delay. That shrill horn, they know, is never sounded by their comrades but on most desperate occasions, and it echoes among the mountains for many leagues round. I have known them brought home by its sound even from the Pied de Melicant. Is any one standing watch at the great gate, my lord ?"

"Nobody," replied the count; "the rest of my people are

now scattered about, I scarcely know where. Go, Ludovico, collect them together, and look out yourself, and listen if you hear the feet of mules."

Ludovico then hurried away, and the count consulted as to the means of removing Saint Foix, who could not have borne the motion of a mule, even if his strength would have supported him in the saddle.

While the count was telling that the banditti, whom they had found in the fort, were secured in the dungeon, Blanche observed that he was himself wounded, and that his left arm was entirely useless; but he smiled at her anxiety, assuring her the wound was trifling.

The count's servants, except two who kept watch at the gate, now appeared, and soon after Ludovico. "I think I hear mules coming along the glen, my lord," said he, "but the roaring of the torrent below will not let me be certain; however, I have brought what will serve the chevalier," he added, showing a bear's skin fastened to a couple of long poles, which had been adapted for the purpose of bringing home such of the banditti as happened to be wounded in their encounters. Ludovico spread it on the ground, and, placing the skins of several goats upon it, made a kind of bed, into which the chevalier, who was however now much revived, was gently lifted; and the poles being raised upon the shoulders of the guides, whose footing among these steeps could best be depended upon, he was borne along with an easy motion. Some of the count's servants were also wounded, but not materially; and their wounds being bound up, they now followed to the great gate. As they passed along the hall, a loud tumult was heard at some distance, and Blanche was terrified. "It is only those villains in the dungeon, my lady," said Ludovico. "They seem to be bursting it open," said the count. "No, my lord," replied Ludovico; "it has an iron door; we have nothing to fear from them; but let me go first, and look out from the rampart."

They quickly followed him, and found their mules browsing before the gates, where the party listened anxiously, but heard

no sound, except that of the torrent below, and of the early breeze sighing among the branches of the old oak that grew in the court; and they were now glad to perceive the first tints of dawn over the mountain-tops. When they had mounted their mules, Ludovico, undertaking to be their guide, led them by an easier path than that by which they had formerly ascended into the glen. "We must avoid that valley to the east, my lord," said he, "or we may meet the banditti; they went out that way in the morning."

The travellers, soon after, quitted this glen, and found themselves in a narrow valley that stretched towards the northwest. The morning light upon the mountains now strengthened fast, and gradually discovered the green hillocks that skirted the winding feet of the cliffs, tufted with cork-tree and evergreen oak. The thunder-clouds, being dispersed, had left the sky perfectly serene, and Blanche was revived by the fresh breeze and by the view of verdure which the late rain had brightened. Soon after, the sun arose, when the dripping rocks, with the shrubs that fringed their summits, and many a turfy slope below, sparkled in his rays. A wreath of mist was seen floating along the extremity of the valley; but the gale bore it before the travellers, and the sunbeams gradually drew it up towards the summit of the mountains. They had proceeded about a league, when Saint Foix having complained of extreme faintness, they stopped to give him refreshment, and that the men who bore him might rest. Ludovico had brought from the fort some flasks of rich Spanish wine, which now proved a reviving cordial not only to Saint Foix but to the whole party; though to him it gave only a remporary relief, for it fed the fever that burned in his veins, and he could neither disguise in his countenance the anguish he suffered, nor suppress the wish that he was arrived at the inn where they had designed to pass the preceding night.

While they thus reposed themselves under the shade of the dark green pines, the count desired Ludovico to explain shortly by what means he had disappeared from the north apartment, how he came into the hands of the banditti, and how he had

ntributed so essentially to serve him and his family, for to m he justly attributed their present deliverance. Ludovico as going to obey him, when suddenly they heard the echo f a pistol-shot from the way they had passed, and they rose alarm hastily to pursue their route.

CHAPTER XXVI

m i l y, meanwhile, was still suffering anxiety as to the fate of alancourt; but Theresa, having at length found a person hom she could entrust on her errand to the steward, informed er that the messenger would return on the following day; nd Emily promised to be at the cottage, Theresa being too me to attend her.

In the evening, therefore, Emily set out alone for the cot-ge, with a melancholy foreboding concerning Valancourt, hile perhaps the gloom of the hour might contribute to epress her spirits. It was a grey autumnal evening, towards e close of the season. when she came within view of The-sa's cottage, she was so much disordered, and her resolution iled her so entirely, that, unable to proceed, she rested on bank beside the path, where, as she sat, the wind that groaned llenly among the lofty branches above, seemed to her melan-oly imagination to bear the sounds of distant lamentation, nd in the pauses of the gust she still fancied she heard the eble and far-off notes of distress. Attention convinced her at this was no more than fancy; but the increasing gloom, hich seemed the sudden close of day, soon warned her to epart, and with faltering steps she again moved towards e cottage. Through the casement appeared the cheerful blaze a wood fire, and Theresa, who had observed Emily proaching, was already at the door to receive her.

"It is a cold evening, madame," said she; "storms are coming , and I thought you would like a fire. Do take this chair the hearth."

Emily, thanking her for this consideration, sat down; and en looking in her face, on which the wood fire threw a

gleam, she was struck with its expression, and, unable to speak, sank back in her chair with a countenance so full of woe that Theresa instantly comprehended the occasion of it, but she remained silent. "Ah !" said Emily at length, "it is unnecessary for me to ask the result of your inquiry—your silence and that look sufficiently explain it;—he is dead !"

"A-well-a-day ! I fear he is," replied Theresa.

"You fear !" said Emily; "do you only fear ?"

"Alas ! yes, madame, I fear he is ! neither the steward nor any of the Epourville family have heard of him since he left Languedoc; and the count is in great affliction about him, for he says he was always punctual in writing." Emily was faint, and asked for some water; and Theresa, alarmed by the voice in which she spoke, hastened to her assistance.

"Oh, no, Theresa, tell me all, while I have the power to hear it," said Emily; "tell me all, I conjure you !"

A knock at the cottage-door prevented Theresa from immediately obeying her mistress; and she was going to open it, when Emily, checking her, requested she would not admit any person; but afterwards recollecting that she had ordered her servant to attend her home, she said it was only Philippe, and endeavoured to restrain her tears, while Theresa opened the door.

A voice that spoke without drew Emily's attention. She listened, turned her eyes to the door, when a person now appeared; and immediately a bright gleam that flashed from the fire, discovered—Valancourt !

Emily, on perceiving him, started from her chair, trembled, and, sinking into it again, became insensible to all around her.

A scream from Theresa now told that she knew Valancourt, whom her imperfect sight and the duskiness of the place had prevented her from immediately recollecting; his attention was immediately called from her to the person whom he saw falling from a chair near the fire; and hastening to her assistance —he perceived that he was supporting Emily ! But he could only exclaim, "Emily !" as he silently watched her recovery, while she averted her eye, and feebly attempted to withdraw

er hand; but in these the first moments which succeeded to he pangs his supposed death had occasioned her, she forgot very fault which had formerly claimed indignation; and eholding Valancourt such as he had appeared when he won er early affection, she experienced emotions of only tender- ess and joy. This, alas! was but the sunshine of a few short noments.

A sense of what she owed to herself restrained her tears, and aught her soon to overcome, in some degree, the emotions of ningled joy and sorrow that contended at her heart as she ose, and, having thanked him for the assistance he had given er, bade Theresa good evening. She had already opened the ottage door, when the pelting storm compelled her to obey heir requests.

Silent and embarrassed she returned to the fire, while Valan- ourt, with increasing agitation, paced the room, as if he vished, yet feared, to speak.

"Theresa, sir," said Emily, with a reserved air, and trying o conquer her tears, "has reason to remember you with grati- ude, and she was concerned because she had not lately heard f you. Allow me to thank you for the kindness you have hown her, and to say, that since I am now upon the spot, she nust not be further indebted to you."

"Emily," said Valancourt, no longer master of his emotions, is it thus you meet him whom once you meant to honour with our hand—thus you meet him, who has loved you, suffered or you?"

Emily in extreme vexation, now rose from her chair: "I must e gone," said she, "the storm is over."

"Stay, Emily! stay, Mademoiselle St. Aubert!" said Valan- ourt, summoning all his resolution; "I will no longer distress ou by my presence. Forgive me, that I did not sooner obey ou, and, if you can, sometimes pity one, who in losing you— as lost all hope of peace! May you be happy, Emily, how- ver wretched I remain—happy as my fondest wish would have ou!"

His voice faltered with the last words, and his countenance

changed, while, with a look of ineffable tenderness and grief he gazed upon her for an instant, and then quitted the cottage.

"M. Valancourt is sadly altered, madame," said Theresa, "he looks so thin to what he used to do, and so melancholy; and then he wears his arm in a sling."

Emily raised her eyes at these words, for she had not observed this last circumstance, and she now did not doubt that Valancourt had received the shot of her gardener at Toulouse: with this conviction, her pity for him returning, she blamed herself for having occasioned him to leave the cottage during the storm.

Soon after, her servants arrived with the carriage; and Emily withdrew to her home, thoughtful and disconsolate.

Meanwhile Valancourt had returned to a little inn of the village, where he had arrived only a few moments before his visit to Theresa's cottage.

Before the evening concluded, he returned to Theresa's cottage. After he had listened, and for a considerable time to all she had to relate concerning Emily, drawing a ring of value from his finger, he delivered it to her with a solemn charge to present it to Emily, of whom he entreated, as a last favour, that she would preserve it for his sake, and sometimes when she looked upon it, remember the unhappy giver.

On the following morning, Emily sat in the parlour adjoining the library, when a servant entered the room, and informed her that a stranger without begged leave to speak with her.

In a few minutes Ludovico appeared, accompanied by Annette, who, as joy rendered her forgetful of all rules of decorum towards her mistress, would not suffer any person to be heard for some time but herself. Emily expressed surprise and satisfaction on seeing Ludovico in safety; and the first emotions increased, when he delivered letters from Count de Villefort and the Lady Blanche, informing her of their late adventure, and of their present situation at an inn among the Pyrenees, where they had been detained by the illness of M. Saint Foix and the indisposition of Blanche, who added,

at the Baron Saint Foix was just arrived to attend his son
his château, where he would remain till the perfect recovery
his wounds, and then return to Languedoc, but her father
d herself proposed to be at La Vallée on the following day.
e added, that Emily's presence would be expected at the
proaching nuptials, and begged she would be prepared to
ceed in a few days to Château-le-Blanc.

She desired Ludovico to give a detail of his adventure in
north apartments, and to tell by what means he became
ompanion of the banditti, with whom the count had found
n.

He immediately obeyed.

'You may remember, madame, that on the night when I
up in the north chamber, my lord the count and M. Henri
ompanied me thither, and that while they remained there
hing happened to excite any alarm. When they were gone
nade a fire in the bedroom, and not being inclined to sleep,
at down on the hearth with a book I had brought with me
divert my mind. I confess I did sometimes look round the
mber with something like apprehension——

'But several times, as the wind whistled round the castle
d shook the old casements, I did fancy I heard odd noises,
d once or twice I got up and looked about me; but nothing
s to be seen except the grim figures in the tapestry, which
med to frown upon me as I looked at them. I had sat thus
above an hour," continued Ludovico, "when again I
ught I heard a noise, and glanced my eyes round the room
discover what it came from; but, not perceiving anything,
egan to read again: and when I had finished the story I
s upon, I felt drowsy and dropped asleep. But presently I
s awakened by the noise I had heard before, and it seemed
come from that part of the chamber where the bed stood;
d then, whether it was the story I had been reading that
ected my spirits, or the strange reports that had been
ead of these apartments, I don't know; but when I looked
vards the bed again, I fancied I saw a man's face within the
ky curtains.

"I confess, madame, my heart did fail me at that instant," continued Ludovico; "but a return of the noise drew my attention from the bed, and I then distinctly heard a sound like that of a key turning in a lock; but what surprised me more was, that I saw no door where the sound seemed to come from. In the next moment, however, the arras near the bed was slowly lifted, and a person appeared behind it, entering from a small door in the wall. He stood for a moment as if half-retreating, with his head bending under the arras, which concealed the upper part of his face, except his eyes scowling beneath the tapestry as he held it; and then, while he raised it higher, I saw the face of another man behind, looking over his shoulder. I know not how it was, but, though my sword was upon the table before me, I had not the power just then to seize it, but sat quite still, watching them with my eyes half-shut, as if I was asleep. I suppose they thought me so, and were debating what they should do; for I heard them whisper, and they stood in the same posture for the value of a minute, and then I thought I perceived other faces in the duskiness beyond the door, and heard louder whispers."

"This door surprises me," said Emily, "because I understood that the count had caused the arras to be lifted, and the walls examined, suspecting that they might have concealed a passage through which you had departed."

"It does not appear so extraordinary to me, madame," replied Ludovico, "that this door should escape notice, because it was formed in a narrow compartment which appeared to be part of the outward wall; and if the count had not passed over it, he might have thought it was useless to search for a door where it seemed as if no passage could communicate with one; but the truth was, that the passage was formed within the wall itself. But to return to the men whom I saw obscurely beyond the door, and who did not suffer me to remain long in suspense concerning their design. They all rushed into the room, and surrounded me, though not before I had snatched up my sword to defend myself. But what could one man do against four? They soon disarmed me, and, having fastened

my arms and gagged my mouth, forced me through the private door, leaving my sword upon the table, to assist, as they said, those who should come in the morning to look for me, in fighting against the ghosts. They then led me through many narrow passages, cut, as I fancied, in the walls, for I had never seen them before, and down several flights of steps, till we came to the vaults underneath the castle; and then opening a stone door, which I should have taken for the wall itself, we went through a long passage, and down other steps cut in the solid rock, when another door delivered us into a cave. After turning and twining about for some time, we reached the mouth of it, and I found myself on the sea-beach at the foot of the cliffs, with the château above. A boat was in waiting, into which the ruffians got, forcing me along with them, and we soon reached a small vessel that was at anchor, where other men appeared, when, setting me aboard, two of the fellows who had seized me followed, and the other two rowed back to the shore while we set sail. I soon found out what all this meant, and what was the business of these men at the château. We landed in Roussillon; and after lingering several days about the shore, some of their comrades came down from the mountains, and carried me with them to the fort, where I remained till my lord so unexpectedly arrived.

"I soon found out, madame," resumed Ludovico, "that they were pirates, who had during many years secreted their spoil in the vaults of the castle, which, being near the sea, suited their purpose well. To prevent detection, they had tried to have it believed that the château was haunted; and having discovered the private way to the north apartments, which had been shut up ever since the death of the lady marchioness, they easily succeeded. The housekeeper and her husband, who were the only persons that had inhabited the castle for some years, were so terrified by the strange noises they heard in the nights, that they would live there no longer. A report soon went abroad that it was haunted; and the whole country believed this the more readily, I suppose, because it had been said that the lady marchioness had died in a strange way, and

because my lord never would return to the place afterwards."

"But why," said Emily, "were not these pirates contented with the cave?—why did they think it necessary to deposit their spoil in the castle?"

"The cave, madame," replied Ludovico, "was open to anybody and their treasures would not long have remained undiscovered there; but in the vaults they were secure so long as the report prevailed of their being haunted. Thus, then, it appears that they brought at midnight the spoil they took on the seas, and kept it till they had opportunities of disposing of it to advantage."

"This is an extraordinary adventure," said Emily. "There are some circumstances, however, concerning the north apartments which still perplex me; but perhaps you may be able to explain them. Did you ever hear the banditti relate anything extraordinary of these rooms?"

"No, madame," replied Ludovico, "I never heard them speak about the rooms, except to laugh at the credulity of the old housekeeper, who once was very near catching one of the pirates; it was since the count arrived at the château, he said; and he laughed heartily as he related the trick he had played off."

A blush spread over Emily's cheek, and she impatiently desired Ludovico to explain himself.

"Why, my lady," said he, "as this fellow was one night in the bedroom, he heard somebody approaching through the next apartment; and not having time to lift up the arras and unfasten the door, he hid himself in the bed just by. There he lay in as great a fright, I suppose——"

"As you was in," interrupted Annette, "when you sat up so boldly to watch by yourself."

"Aye," said Ludovico, "in as great a fright as he ever made anybody else suffer: and presently the housekeeper and some other person came up to the bed; when he, thinking they were going to examine it, bethought him, that his only chance of escaping detection was by terrifying them; so he lifted up the counterpane; but that did not do, till he raised his face above

it; and then they both set off," he said, " as if they had seen the devil; and he got out of the rooms undiscovered."

Still, however, Emily remembered with awe the mysterious music which had been heard at midnight near Château-le-Blanc, and she asked Ludovico if he could give any explanation of it; but he could not.

"I only know, madame," he added, "that it did not belong to the pirates; for I have heard them laugh about it, and say they believed the devil was in league with them there."

"From that period they considered the château as nearly their own; but I found from the discourse of their comrades that, though they were cautious at first in showing their power there, they had once very nearly betrayed themselves. Going one night, as was their custom, to the north chamber to repeat the noises that had occasioned such alarm among the servants, they heard, as they were about to unfasten the secret door, voices in the bedroom. My lord has since told me that himself and M. Henri were then in the apartment, and they heard very extraordinary sounds of lamentation, which it seems were made by these fellows, with their usual design of spreading terror; and my lord has owned he then felt somewhat more than surprise; but as it was necessary to the peace of his family that no notice should be taken, he was silent on the subject, and enjoined silence to his son."

Emily, having made some further inquiries upon this strange affair, she dismissed Ludovico, and went to give orders for the accommodation of her friends on the following day.

In the evening, Theresa, lame as she was, came to deliver the ring with which Valancourt had entrusted her; and when she presented it, Emily refused to accept it herself, though to have done so would have afforded her a melancholy pleasure.

Theresa was afflicted, and made another attempt, though feeble, to interest her for Valancourt; but the unusual displeasure expressed in Emily's countenance soon obliged her to desist, and she departed in wonder and lamentation.

CHAPTER XXVII

On the following day, the arrival of her friend revived the drooping Emily, and La Vallée became once more the scene of social kindness and of elegant hospitality. The unfortunate adventure on the Pyrenees had made the count very anxious to reach home; and after a little more than a week's stay at La Vallée, Emily prepared to set out with her friends for Languedoc, assigning the care of her house, during her absence, to Theresa.

On the following day, Count de Villefort, with Emily and the Lady Blanche, left La Vallée, and on the ensuing evening arrived at the Château-le-Blanc, where the countess, Henri, and M. Du Pont, whom Emily was surprised to find there, received them with much joy and congratulation.

On the following evening, the view of the convent towers rising among the shadowy woods, reminded Emily of the nun whose condition had so much affected her; and anxious to know how she was, as well as to see some of her former friends, she and the Lady Blanche extended their walk to the monastery. At the gate stood a carriage, which, from the heat of the horses, appeared to have just arrived; but a more than common stillness pervaded the court and the cloisters through which Emily and Blanche passed in their way to the great hall. In the parlour they found several of the boarders, who rejoiced to see Emily, and told her many little circumstances that had happened in the convent since her departure. While they thus conversed, the abbess entered the room, and expressed much satisfaction at seeing Emily; but her manner was unusually solemn, and her countenance dejected. "Our house," said she, after the first salutations were over, "is truly a house of mourning—a daughter is now paying the debt of nature. You have heard, perhaps, that our daughter Agnes is dying ?"

Emily expressed her sincere concern.

"The latter days of Agnes," resumed the abbess, "have been exemplary; would they might atone for the errors of her former ones ! I have left her with her confessor, and a gentle-

man whom she has long been anxious to see, and who is just arrived from Paris. They, I hope, will be able to administer the repose which her mind has hitherto wanted."

Emily fervently joined in the wish.

"During her illness she has sometimes named you," resumed the abbess; "perhaps it would comfort her to see you; when her present visitors have left her we will go to her chamber, if the scene will not be too melancholy for your spirits."

Little more was said by the abbess, when this general reverie was interrupted by the entrance of a stranger, M. Bonnac, who had just quitted the chamber of Sister Agnes. He appeared much disturbed, but Emily fancied that his countenance had more the expression of horror than of grief. Having drawn the abbess to a distant part of the room, he conversed with her for some time, during which she seemed to listen with earnest attention, and he to speak with caution and a more than common degree of interest. When he had concluded, he bowed silently to the rest of the company, and quitted the room. The abbess, soon after, proposed going to the chamber of Sister Agnes; to which Emily consented, though not without some reluctance, and Lady Blanche remained with the boarders below.

At the door of the chamber they met the confessor, and they entered the apartment, where, on a mattress, was laid Sister Agnes, with one nun watching in the chair beside her. Her countenance was so much changed that Emily would scarcely have recollected her, had she not been prepared to do so; it was ghastly, and overspread with gloomy horror; her dim and hollow eyes were fixed on a crucifix which she held upon her bosom; and she was so much engaged in thought, as not to perceive the abbess and Emily till they stood at the bedside. Then, turning her heavy eyes, she fixed them, in wild horror, upon Emily; and, screaming, exclaimed, "Ah ! that vision comes upon me in my dying hours !"

Emily started back in terror, and looked for explanation to the abbess, who made her a signal not to be alarmed; and calmly said to Agnes, "Daughter, I have brought Mademoiselle

St. Aubert to visit you; I thought you would be glad to see her."

Agnes made no reply; but still gazing wildly upon Emily, exclaimed, "It is her very self ! Oh ! there is all that fascination in her look which proved my destruction ! What would you have ?—What is it you come to demand ?—Retribution ?—It will soon be yours—it is yours already. How many years have passed since last I saw you ! My crime is but as yesterday.—Yet I am grown old beneath it; while you are still young and blooming—blooming as when you forced me to commit that most abhorred deed ! Oh ! could I once forget it !—yet what would that avail ?—the deed is done !"

Agnes sank down apparently lifeless, and Emily, unable to support herself, leaned against the bed.

When Agnes recovered her senses, she again fixed her eyes on Emily; but their wild expression was gone, and a gloomy melancholy had succeeded. It was some moments before she recovered sufficient spirits to speak: she then said feebly, "The likeness is wonderful !—surely it must be something more than fancy. Tell me, I conjure you," she added, addressing Emily, "though your name is St. Aubert, are you not the daughter of the marchioness ?"

"What marchioness ?" said Emily in extreme surprise; for she had imagined, from the calmness of Agnes's manner, that her intellects were restored. The abbess gave her a significant glance, but she repeated the question.

"What marchioness ?" exclaimed Agnes; "I know but of one —the Marchioness de Villeroi."

"Bring me that casket, sister," said Agnes.

The nun brought the casket; and Agnes having directed her how to unlock it, she took thence a miniature, in which Emily perceived the exact resemblance of the picture which she had found among her late father's papers. Agnes held out her hand to receive it; gazed upon it earnestly for some moments in silence; and then, with a countenance of deep despair, threw up her eyes to heaven, and prayed inwardly. When she had finished, she returned the miniature to Emily. "Keep it,"

said she; "I bequeath it to you, for I must believe it is your right. I have frequently observed the resemblance between you; but never, till this day, did it strike upon my conscience so powerfully ! Stay, sister, do not remove the casket—there is another picture I would show."

The nun returned with the casket; and Agnes pointing out to her a secret drawer, she took from it another miniature. "Here," said Agnes, as she offered it to Emily, "learn a lesson for your vanity, at least; look well at this picture, and see if you can discover any resemblance between what I was and what I am."

Emily impatiently received the miniature, which her eyes had scarcely glanced upon, before her trembling hands had nearly suffered it to fall—it was the resemblance of the portrait of Signora Laurentini, which she had formerly seen in the castle of Udolpho—the lady who had disappeared in so mysterious a manner, and whom Montoni had been suspected of having caused to be murdered.

"I have seen this face before," said Emily at length; "was it really your resemblance ?"

"You may well ask that question," replied the nun—"but it was once esteemed a striking likeness of me."

Emily listened to Agnes, while she examined the miniature, and became confirmed in her opinion of its strong resemblance to the portrait of Udolpho. "This face is familiar to me," said she, wishing to lead the nun to an explanation, yet fearing to discover too abruptly her knowledge of Udolpho.

"You are mistaken," replied Agnes; "you certainly never saw that picture before."

"No," replied Emily; "but I have seen one extremely like it."

"Impossible," said Agnes, who may now be called the Lady Laurentini.

"It was in the castle of Udolpho," continued Emily, looking steadfastly at her.

"Of Udolpho ?" exclaimed Laurentini: "of Udolpho in Italy ?" "The same," replied Emily.

"You know me then," said Laurentini, "and you are the

daughter of the marchioness." Emily was somewhat surprised at this abrupt assertion. "I am the daughter of the late M. St. Aubert," said she; "and the lady you name is an utter stranger to me."

"At least you believe so," rejoined Laurentini.

Emily asked what reasons there could be to believe otherwise.

"The family likeness that you bear her," said the nun. "The marchioness, it is known, was attached to a gentleman of Gascony, at the time when she accepted the hand of the marquis by the command of her father. Ill-fated, unhappy woman !"

Emily remembering the extreme emotion which St. Aubert had betrayed on the mention of the marchioness, would now have suffered something more than surprise, had her confidence in his integrity been less; as it was, she could not for a moment believe what the words of Laurentini insinuated; yet she still felt strongly interested concerning them, and begged that she would explain them further.

"Do not urge me on that subject," said the nun, "it is to me a terrible one ! Would that I could blot it from my memory !" She sighed deeply, and, after the pause of a moment, asked Emily by what means she had discovered her name.

"By your portrait in the castle of Udolpho, to which this miniature bears a striking resemblance," replied Emily.

"You have been at Udolpho, then ?" said the nun with great emotion. "Alas ! what scenes does the mention of it revive in my fancy—scenes of happiness—of suffering— and of horror !"

At this moment the terrible spectacle which Emily had witnessed in a chamber of that castle occurred to her; and she shuddered while she looked upon the nun—and recollected her late words—that years of prayer and penitence could not wash out the foulness of murder. She was now compelled to attribute these to another cause than that of delirium. With a degree of horror that almost deprived her of sense, she now believed she looked upon a murderess.

"Your sudden departure from Udolpho," said she.

Laurentini groaned.

"The reports that followed it," continued Emily—"the west chamber—the mournful veil—the object it conceals!—When murders are committed——"

The nun shrieked. "What! there again!" said she, endeavouring to raise herself, while her starting eyes seemed to follow some object round the room—"Come from the grave—What! Blood—blood too!—There was no blood—thou canst not say it!—Nay, do not smile,—do not smile so piteously!"

Laurentini fell into convulsions as she uttered the last words; and Emily, unable any longer to endure the horror of the scene, hurried from the room, and sent some nuns to the assistance of the abbess.

Emily and Blanche were departing, when the abbess appeared, who, drawing the former aside, said she had something of consequence to say to her, but as it was late, she would not detain her then, and requested to see her on the following day.

Emily promised to visit her, and, having taken leave, returned with the Lady Blanche towards the château. On the way Emily was too much engaged by the horrors of the scene she had just witnessed, to be affected by the solemnity of the shades, otherwise than as they served to promote her gloomy reverie, from which, however, she was at length recalled by the Lady Blanche, who pointed out at some distance in the dusky path they were winding, two persons slowly advancing. It was impossible to avoid them without striking into a still more secluded part of the wood, whither the strangers might easily follow; but all apprehension vanished when Emily distinguished the voice of Monsieur Du Pont, and perceived that his companion was the gentleman whom she had seen at the monastery, and who was now conversing with so much earnestness as not immediately to perceive their approach. When Du Pont joined the ladies, the stranger took leave; and they proceeded to the château, where the count, when he heard of M. Bonnac, claimed him for an acquaintance, and, on learning the melancholy occasion of his visit to Languedoc, and

that he was lodged at a small inn in the village, begged the favour of M. Du Pont to invite him to the château.

The latter was happy to do so: and they went to the château, where the kindness of the count and the sprightliness of his son were exerted to dissipate the gloom that overhung the spirits of the stranger. M. Bonnac was an officer in the French service, and appeared to be about fifty; his figure was tall and commanding, his manners had received the last polish.

On the following morning Emily was too indisposed to attend her appointment with the abbess, and before the day concluded she heard that Sister Agnes was no more. M. Bonnac received this intelligence with concern; but Emily observed that he did not appear so much affected now as on the preceding evening, immediately after quitting the apartment of the nun, whose death was probably less terrible to him than the confession he had been then called upon to witness. However this might be, he was perhaps consoled, in some degree, by a knowledge of the legacy bequeathed him, since his family was large, and the extravagance of some part of it had lately been the means of involving him in great distress, and even in the horrors of a prison.

To his friend M. Du Pont he recited some particulars of his late sufferings, when it appeared that he had been confined for several months in one of the prisons of Paris, with little hope of release, and without the comfort of seeing his wife.

"Our situation affected those who happened to witness it," continued M. Bonnac: "and one generous friend, who was in confinement at the same time, afterwards employed the first moments of his liberty in efforts to obtain mine. He succeeded; the heavy debt that oppressed me was discharged; and when I would have expressed my sense of the obligation I had received, my benefactor was fled from my search. I have reason to believe he was the victim of his own generosity, and that he returned to the state of confinement from which he had released me; but every inquiry after him was unsuccessful. Amiable and unfortunate Valancourt!"

"Valancourt!" exclaimed M. Du Pont. "Of what family?"

"The Valancourts, Counts Duvarney," replied M. Bonnac. The emotion of M. Du Pont, when he discovered the generous benefactor of his friend to be the rival of his love, can only be imagined; but having overcome his first surprise, he dissipated the apprehension of M. Bonnac, by acquainting him that Valancourt was at liberty, and had lately been in Languedoc; after which his affection for Emily prompted him to make some inquiries respecting the conduct of his rival during his stay at Paris, of which M. Bonnac appeared to be well informed. The answers he received were such as convinced him that Valancourt had been much misrepresented; and painful as was the sacrifice, he formed the just design of relinquishing his pursuit of Emily, to a lover who, it now appeared, was not unworthy of the regard with which she honoured him.

When the count was informed of the error he had committed, he was extremely shocked at the consequence of his credulity; and the account which M. Bonnac gave of his friend's situation while at Paris, convinced him that Valancourt had been entrapped by the schemes of a set of dissipated young men with whom his profession had partly obliged him to associate, rather than by an inclination to vice. But as the last reparation he could now make Valancourt was to afford him an opportunity of explaining to Emily his former conduct, he immediately wrote to request his forgiveness of the unintentional injury he had done him, and to invite him to Château-le-Blanc. Motives of delicacy withheld the count from informing Emily of this letter.

CHAPTER XXVIII

S o m e circumstances of an extraordinary nature now withdrew Emily from her own sorrows, and excited emotions which partook of both surprise and horror.

A few days following that on which Signora Laurentini died, her will was opened at the monastery, in the presence of the superiors and M. Bonnac, when it was found that one-third of her personal property was bequeathed to the nearest surviving

relative of the late Marchiones de Villeroi, and that Emily was the person.

With the secret of Emily's family the abbess had long been acquainted; and it was in observance of the earnest request of St. Aubert, who was known to the friar that attended him on his death-bed, that his daughter had remained in ignorance of her relationship to the marchioness. But some hints had fallen from Signora Laurentini during her last interview with Emily, and a confession of a very extraordinary nature given in her dying hours, had made the abbess think it necessary to converse with her young friend on the topic she had not before ventured to introduce; and it was for this purpose that she had requested to see her on the morning that followed her interview with the nun. Emily's indisposition had then prevented the intended conversation; but now, after the will had been examined, she received a summons, which she immediately obeyed, and became informed of circumstances that powerfully affected her. As the narrative of the abbess was, however, deficient in many particulars of which the reader may wish to be informed, and the history of the nun is materially connected with the fate of the Marchioness de Villeroi, we shall omit the conversation that passed in the parlour of the convent, and mingle with our relation a brief history of Laurentini Di Udolpho, who was the only child of her parents, and heiress of the ancient house of Udolpho, in the territory of Venice. It was the first misfortune of her life, and that which led to all her succeeding misery, that the friends who ought to have restrained her strong passions, and mildly instructed her in the art of governing them, nurtured them by early indulgence.

The death of her father and mother left her to her own discretion, under the dangerous circumstances attendant on youth and beauty. She was fond of company, delighted with admiration to contradict her inclinations; had a gay and brilliant wit, and was mistress of all the arts of fascination. Her conduct was such as might have been expected from the weakness of her principles and the strength of her passions.

Among her numerous admirers was the late Marquis de

Villeroi, who, on his tour through Italy, saw Laurentini at Venice, where she usually resided, and became her passionate adorer. Equally captivated by the figure and accomplishments of the marquis, who was at that period one of the most distinguished noblemen at the French court, she had the art so effectually to conceal from him the dangerous traits of her character, and the blemishes of her late conduct, that he solicited her hand in marriage.

Before the nuptials were concluded, she retired to the castle of Udolpho, whither the marquis followed, and where her conduct, relaxing from the propriety which she had lately assumed, discovered to him the precipice on which he stood. A minuter inquiry than he had before thought it necessary to make, convinced him that he had been deceived in her character; and she, whom he had designed for his wife, afterwards became his mistress.

Having passed some weeks at Udolpho, he was called abruptly to France, whither he returned with extreme reluctance, for his heart was still fascinated by the arts of Laurentini, with whom, however, he had on various pretences delayed his marriage; but, to reconcile her to this separation, he now gave repeated promises of returning to conclude the nuptials, as soon as the affair which thus suddenly called him to France should permit.

Soothed in some degree by these assurances, she suffered him to depart; and soon after, her relative, Montoni, arriving at Udolpho, renewed the addresses which she had before refused, and which she now again rejected. Meanwhile her thoughts were constantly with the Marquis de Villeroi, for whom she suffered all the delirium of Italian love, cherished by the solitude to which she confined herself; for she had now lost all taste for the pleasures of society and the gaiety of amusement. During this interval, Laurentini's fancy, occupied incessantly by one idea, became disordered; and her whole heart being devoted to one object, life became hateful to her, when she believed that object lost.

Several months passed, during which she heard nothing from

the Marquis de Villeroi, and her days were marked at intervals, with the frenzy of passion and the sullenness of despair.

At length a report reached her that the marquis had married in France; and after suffering all the extremes of love, jealousy, and indignation, she formed the desperate resolution of going secretly to that country, and, if the report proved true, of attempting a deep revenge. To her favourite woman only she confided the plan of her journey; and she engaged her to partake of it. Having collected her jewels, which, descending to her from many branches of her family, were of immense value, and all her cash, to a very large amount, they were packed in a trunk, which was privately conveyed to a neighbouring town, whither Laurentini, with this only servant, followed, and thence proceeded secretly to Leghorn, where they embarked for France.

When, on her arrival in Languedoc, she found that the Marquis de Villeroi had been married for some months, her despair almost deprived her of reason, and she alternately projected and abandoned the horrible design of murdering the marquis, his wife, and herself. At length she contrived to throw herself in his way, with an intention of reproaching him for his conduct, and of stabbing herself in his presence; but when she again saw him who so long had been the constant object of her thoughts and affections, resentment yielded to love; her resolution failed; she trembled with the conflict of emotions that assailed her heart, and fainted away.

The marquis was not proof against her beauty and sensibility; all the energy with which he had first loved returned, for his passion had been resisted by prudence, rather than overcome by indifference; and since the honour of his family would not permit him to marry her, he had endeavoured to subdue his love; and had so far succeeded as to select the then marchioness for his wife, whom he loved at first with a tempered and rational affection. But the mild virtues of that amiable lady did not recompense him for her indifference, which appeared, notwithstanding her efforts to conceal it; and he had for some time suspected that her affections were

engaged by another person, when Laurentini arrived in Languedoc. This artful Italian soon perceived that she had regained her influence over him; and, soothed by the discovery, she determined to live, and to employ all her enchantments to win his consent to the diabolical deed, which she believed was necessary to the security of her happiness. She conducted her scheme with deep dissimulation and patient perseverance; and having completely estranged the affections of the marquis from his wife, whose gentle goodness and unimpassioned manners had ceased to please, when contrasted with the captivations of the Italian, she proceeded to awaken in his mind the jealousy of pride, for it was no longer that of love, and even pointed out to him the person to whom she affirmed the marchioness had sacrificed her honour; but Laurentini had first extorted from him a solemn promise to forbear avenging himself upon his rival. This was an important part of her plan; for she knew that if his desire of vengeance was restrained towards one party, it would burn more fiercely towards the other, and he might then perhaps be prevailed on to assist in the horrible act, which would release him from the only barrier that withheld him from making her his wife.

The innocent marchioness meanwhile observed with extreme grief the alteration in her husband's manners. He became reserved and thoughtful in her presence; his conduct was austere, and sometimes even rude; and he left her, for many hours together, to weep for his unkindness, and to form plans for the recovery of his affection. His conduct afflicted her the more, because in obedience to the command of her father she had accepted his hand, though her affections were engaged to another whose amiable disposition she had reason to believe would have ensured her happiness. This circumstance Laurentini had discovered soon after her arrival in France, and had made ample use of it in assisting her designs upon the marquis, to whom she adduced such seeming proof of his wife's infidelity, that, in the frantic rage of wounded honour, he consented to destroy his wife. A slow poison was administered,

and she fell a victim to the jealousy and subtlety of Laurentini, and to the guilty weakness of her husband.

But the moment of Laurentini's triumph, the moment to which she had looked forward for the completion of all her wishes, proved only the commencement of a suffering that never left her to her dying hour.

The passion of revenge, which had in part stimulated her to the commission of this atrocious deed, died even at the moment when it was gratified, and left her to the horrors of unavailing pity and remorse, which would probably have empoisoned all the years she had promised herself with the Marquis de Villeroi, had her expectations of an alliance with him been realized. But he, too, had found the moment of his revenge to be that of remorse as to himself, and detestation as to the partner of his crime; the feeling which he had mistaken for conviction was no more; and he stood astonished and aghast, that no proof remained of his wife's infidelity, now that she had suffered the punishment of guilt. Even when he was informed that she was dying, he had felt suddenly and unaccountably reassured of her innocence; nor was the solemn assurance she made him in her last hour capable of affording him a stronger conviction of her blameless conduct.

In the first horrors of remorse and despair, he felt inclined to deliver up himself, and the woman who had plunged him into this abyss of guilt, into the hands of justice; but when the paroxysm of his suffering was over, his intention changed. Laurentini, however, he saw only once afterwards, and that was to curse her as the instigator of his crime, and to say, that he spared her life only on condition that she passed the rest of her days in prayer and penance. Overwhelmed with disappointment, on receiving contempt and abhorrence from the man for whose sake she had not scrupled to stain her conscience with human blood, and touched with horror of the unavailing crime she had committed, she renounced the world, and retired to the monastery of St. Claire, a dreadful victim to unresisted passion.

The marquis, immediately after the death of his wife,

quitted Château-le-Blanc, to which he never returned, and endeavoured to lose the sense of his crime amidst the tumult of war, or the dissipations of a capital. But his efforts were vain; a deep dejection hung over him ever after, for which his most intimate friend could not account; and he at length died, with a degree of horror nearly equal to that which Laurentini had suffered. The physician, who had observed the singular appearance of the unfortunate marchioness after her death, had been bribed to silence; and as the surmises of a few of the servants had proceeded no further than a whisper, the affair had never been investigated. Whether this whisper ever reached the father of the marchioness, and if it did, whether the difficulty of obtaining proof, deterred him from prosecuting the Marquis de Villeroi, is uncertain; but her death was deeply lamented by some part of her family, and particularly by her brother, M. St. Aubert; for that was the degree of relationship which had existed between Emily's father and the marchioness; and there is no doubt that he suspected the manner of her death. Many letters passed between the marquis and him, soon after the decease of his beloved sister, the subject of which was not known, but there is reason to believe that they related to the cause of her death; and these were the papers, together with some of the letters of the marchioness, who had confided to her brother the occasion of her unhappiness, which St. Aubert had so solemnly enjoined his daughter to destroy: and anxiety for her peace had probably made him forbid her to inquire into the melancholy story to which they alluded. Such, indeed, had been his affliction on the premature death of this his favourite sister, whose unhappy marriage had from the first excited his tenderest pity, that he never could hear her named, or mention her himself after her death, except to Madame St. Aubert. From Emily, whose sensibility he feared to awaken, he had so carefully concealed her history and name, that she was ignorant, till now, that she ever had such a rèlative as the Marchioness de Villeroi; and from this motive he had enjoined

silence to his only surviving sister, Madame Cheron, who had scrupulously observed his request.

It was over some of the last pathetic letters of the marchioness that St. Aubert was weeping when he was observed by Emily on the eve of her departure from La Vallée, and it was her picture which he had so fondly caressed. Her disastrous death may account for the emotion he had betrayed on hearing her named by La Voisin, and for his request to be interred near the monument of the Villerois, where her remains were deposited, but not those of her husband, who was buried, where he died, in the north of France.

Laurentini, on her arrival in France, had carefully concealed her name and family, and, the better to disguise her real istory, had, on enetering the convent, caused the story to be circulated which had imposed on Sister Frances; and it is probable that the abbess, who did not preside in the convent at the time of her novitiation, was also entirely ignorant of the truth. The deep remorse that seized on the mind of Laurentini, together with the sufferings of disappointed passion, for she still loved the marquis, again unsettled her intellect; and after the first paroxysms of despair were passed, a heavy and silent melancholy had settled upon her spirits, which suffered few interruptions from fits of frenzy till the time of her death. During many years, it had been her only amusement to walk in the woods near the monastery, in the solitary hours of night, and to play upon a favourite instrument, to which she sometimes joined the delightful melody of her voice in the most solemn and melancholy airs of her native country, modulated by all the energetic feeling that dwelt in her heart. The physician who had attended her recommended it to the superior to indulge her in this whim, as the only means of soothing her distempered fancy; and she was suffered to walk in the lonely hours of night, attended by the servant who had accompanied her from Italy; but as the indulgence transgressed against the rules of the convent, it was kept as secret as possible; and thus the mysterious music of Laurentini had combined, with other circumstances, to produce a report

that not only the château, but its neighbourhood, was haunted.

Soon after her entrance into this holy community, and before she had shown any symptoms of insanity there, she made a will, in which, after bequeathing a consirable legacy to the convent, she divided the remainder of her personal property, which her jewels made very valuable, between the wife of M. Bonnac, who was an Italian lady, and her relation, and the nearest surviving relative of the late Marchioness de Villeroi. As Emily St. Aubert was not only the nearest but the sole relative, this legacy descended to her, and thus explained to her the whole mystery of her father's conduct.

The resemblance between Emily and her unfortunate aunt had frequently been observed by Laurentini, and had occasioned the singular behaviour which had formerly alarmed her: but it was in the nun's dying hour, when her conscience gave her perpetually the idea of the marchioness, that she became more sensible than ever of this likeness, and in her frenzy deemed it no resemblance of the person she had injured, but the original herself. The bold assertion that had followed on the recovery of her senses, that Emily was the daughter of the Marchioness de Villeroi, arose from suspicion that she was so; for, knowing that her rival, when she married the marquis, was attached to another lover, she had scarcely scrupled to believe that her honour had been sacrificed, like her own, to an unresisted passion.

Of a crime, however, to which Emily had suspected, from her frenzied confession of murder, that she had been instrumental in the castle of Udolpho, Laurentini was innocent; and she had herself been deceived concerning the spectacle that formerly occasioned her so much terror, and had since compelled her, for a while, to attribute the horrors of the nun to a consciousness of a murder committed in that castle.

It may be remembered that in a chamber of Udolpho hung a black veil, whose singular situation had excited Emily's curiosity, and which afterwards disclosed an object that had overwhelmed her with horror; for, on lifting it, there appeared, instead of the picture she had expected, within a recess of

the wall, a human figure, of ghastly paleness, stretched at its length, and dressed in the habiliments of the grave. What added to the horror of the spectacle, was, that the face appeared partly decayed and disfigured by worms, which were visible on the features and hands. On such an object it will be readily believed that no person could endure to look twice. Emily, it may be recollected, had, after the first glance, let the veil drop, and her terror had prevented her from ever after provoking a renewal of such suffering as she had then experienced. Had she dared to look again, her delusion and her fears would have vanished together, and she would have preceived that the figure before her was not human, but was formed of wax. The history of it is somewhat extraordinary, though not without example in the records of that fierce severity which monkish superstition has sometimes inflicted on mankind. A member of the house of Udolpho having committed some offence against the prerogative of the Church, had been condemned to the penance of contemplating, during certain hours of the day, a waxen image, made to resemble a human body in the state to which it is reduced after death. This penance, serving as a memento of the condition at which he must himself arrive, had been designed to reprove the pride of the Marquis of Udolpho, which had formerly so much exasperated that of the Romish Church; and he had not only superstitiously observed this penance to which he had enjoined himself, which he had believed was to obtain a pardon for all his sins, but had made it a condition in his will, that his descendants should preserve the image on pain of forfeiting to the Church a certain part of his domain.

This image was so horribly natural, that it is not surprising that Emily should have mistaken it for the object it resembled; nor, since she had heard such an extraordinary account concerning the disappearing of the late lady of the castle, and had such experience of the character of Montoni, that she should have believed this to be the murdered body of the Lady Laurentini, and that he had been the contriver of her death.

After the late discoveries, Emily was distinguished at the

château by the count and his family as a relative of the house of Villeroi, and received, if possible, more friendly attention than had yet been shown her.

One evening, having wandered with her lute to the woods that overbrowed the shore, she entered the ruined tower, and ascended a winding staircase that led to a small chamber which was less decayed than the rest of the building, and whence she had often gazed with admiration on the wide prospect of sea and land that extended below. The sun was now setting on that tract of the Pyrenees which divides Languedoc from Roussillon.

Though the sun had now sunk behind the mountains, and even his reflected light was fading from their highest points, Emily did not leave the watch-tower, but continued to indulge her melancholy reverie, till a footstep at a little distance startled her, and on looking through the gate she observed a person walking below, whom, however, soon perceiving to be M. Bonnac, she returned to the quiet thoughtfulness his step had interrupted. After some time she struck her lute, and sung her favourite air; but again a step disturbed her, and, as she paused to listen, she heard it ascending the staircase of the tower. The gloom of the hour, perhaps, made her sensible to some degree of fear, which she might not otherwise have felt; for only a few minutes before she had seen M. Bonnac pass. The steps were quick and bounding, and in the next moment the door of the chamber opened, and a person entered whose features were veiled in the obscurity of twilight; but his voice could not be concealed, for it was the voice of Valancourt ! At the sound, never heard by Emily without emotion, she started in terror, astonishment, and doubtful pleasure; and had scarcely beheld him at her feet, when she sank into a seat.

It was a considerable time before she revived; but when her recollection returned, she repulsed his attentions with an air of reserve, and inquired, with as much displeasure as it was possible she could feel in these first moments of his appearance, the occasion of his visit.

"Ah, Emily !" said Valancourt, "that air, those words—

alas ! I have, then, little to hope—when you ceased to esteem me, you ceased also to love me !"

"Most true, sir," replied Emily, endeavouring to command her trembling voice; "and if you had valued my esteem, you would not have given me this new occasion for uneasiness."

Valancourt's countenance changed suddenly from the anxieties of doubt to an expression of surprise and dismay; he was silent a moment, and then said, "I had been taught to hope for a very different reception ! Are you, indeed, ignorant that Count de Villefort has detected the slanders that have robbed me of all I hold dear on earth, and has invited me hither to justify to you my former conduct ? It is surely impossible you can be uninformed of these circumstances, and I am again torturing myself with a false hope !"

The silence of Emily confirmed this supposition.

"Valancourt ! I was till this moment ignorant of all the circumstances you have mentioned; the emotion I now suffer may assure you of the truth of this, and that though I had ceased to esteem, I had not taught myself entirely to forget you !"

"This moment !" said Valancourt in a low voice, and leaning for support against the window—"this moment brings with it a conviction that overpowers me !—I am dear to you, then —still dear to you, my Emily !"

"Is it necessary that I should tell you so ?" she replied: "is it necessary that I should say—these are the first moments of joy I have known since your departure, and that they repay me for all those of pain I have suffered in the interval ?"

The marriages of the Lady Blanche and Emily St Aubert were celebrated on the same day, and with the ancient baronial magnificence, at Château-le-Blanc. The feasts were held in the great hall of the castle, which on this occasion was hung with superb new tapestry, representing the exploits of Charlemagne and his twelve peers: here were seen the Saracens, with their horrible visors advancing to battle; and there were displayed the wild solemnities of incantation, and the necro-

mantic feats exhibited by the magician Jarl before the emperor. The sumptuous banners of the family of Villeroi, which had long slept in dust, were once more unfurled, to wave over the Gothic points of painted casements; and music echoed in many a lingering close, through every winding gallery and colonnade of that vast edifice.

Oh! useful may it be to have shown, that though the vicious can sometimes pour affliction upon the good, their power is transient and their punishment certain; and that innocence, though oppressed by injustice, shall, supported by patience, finally triumph over misfortune!

And if the weak hand that has recorded this tale, has by its scenes, beguiled the mourner of one hour of sorrow, or by its moral, taught him to sustain it—the effort, however humble, has not been vain, nor is the writer unrewarded.

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